PLUG-INS | FILTERS | PHOTO EDITING | PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS | Q&A

Free CD inside

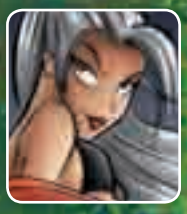
Photoshop® creative

The magazine for Adobe® Photoshop® inspiration and advice

Inside

Expand your knowledge
Take your artistic skills to new levels with Photoshop

3D effects
Make your art virtually burst out of the page



Dodge and Burn tricks
Apply shadows and highlights like a true pro

Share your work
Our in-depth guide to creating your very own portfolio

Create your own gift box
Make the perfect present by creating a bespoke gift box from scratch

Paint like Seurat
Learn how to use custom brushes to perfect the art of Pointilism

Create the cover
Follow our expert step-by-step tutorial

Free CD-ROM!
- **163** Inspirational stock photos
- **298** Artistic brushes
- **34** Custom shapes
- **45** Creative fonts

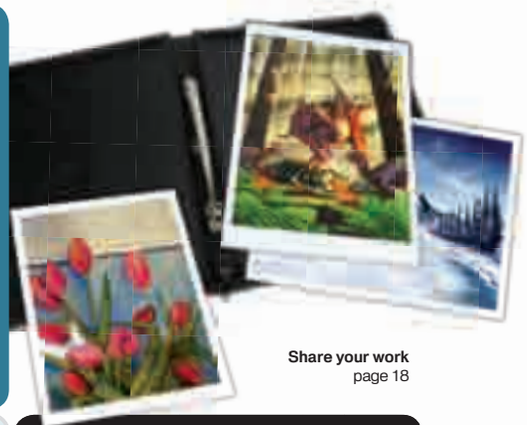
and much more

42 pages of creative tutorials inside

eMag

Welcome

A glimpse of what's in store this issue…



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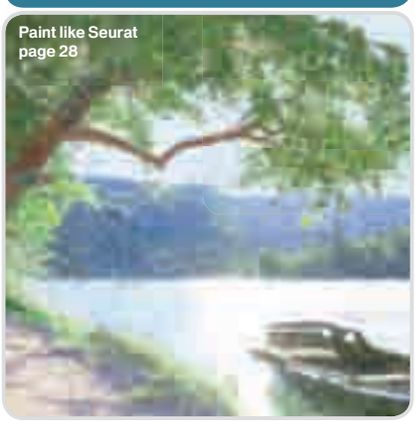

Paint like Seurat
page 28

Mission Statement

Here at *Photoshop Creative*, we promise to always give you the best selection of resources to help improve your Photoshop skills. Whether it's in-depth guides to tools and techniques, or showing how to create a work of digital art, we'll make sure the information you get is accurate and informative. We want you to get the optimum Photoshop experience, and have as much fun using the program as we do putting the magazine together.

Create personalised gift boxes
page 64

Learn about Actions
page 46

Nothing beats that great sense of achievement you get when you've finished a Photoshop project – which is why it's such a shame to keep your creations to yourself. This issue we take an in-depth look at how to share your work with our feature on producing your own portfolio. Gone are the days when you had to lug around bulky folders – now there are multiple options to choose from. Check out page 18 to find the best way to share your work.

Never fear if you think you don't have enough work to fill a portfolio; we've got plenty of tutorials in store for you to follow to bulk up your workbook. If you're feeling artistic, check out our fantastic 'Paint like Seurat' tutorial on page 28. Learn how to use your own custom brushes to recreate Seurat's unique 'Pointilism' style perfectly.

On a more practical level, you'll learn how to further your photo-editing skills with our pain-free cosmetic surgery tutorial on page 54 – perfect for taking those portraits from glum to glam. Plus you'll find our Big Technique particularly useful this issue as we delve into the world of Actions (page 46).

If all that's not enough, follow our excellent walkthrough on page 64 on how to produce your very own gift boxes from scratch, perfect for giving presents that personal touch.

There are plenty of projects to get stuck into this issue, so dive in and enjoy!

Rosie Tanner

Rosie Tanner **Deputy Editor**
rosie.tanner@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Creative Forum

This is the place where you get to share your Photoshop thoughts, troubles and triumphs with fellow readers

Back in the game

I'm from Brockville, Ontario, Canada and have been teaching high school visual arts for 21 years. I specialise in photography and have spent the last four or five years developing a digital art course. I teach with Photoshop Elements but have been teaching myself, with your help, using CS2. Teaching, family life and many responsibilities have prevented me from producing images for a very long time. My 'coming out' was last fall in a local art show and I've since had a solo exhibition in November at our city's Art Center. Please take a look at a few of my images. Thank you.
Paul Matte

Hi Paul, it's great to see you've re-ignited your passion for Photoshop. Your solo exhibition proves you can always pick up where you left off. No doubt you'll be an inspiration to all those who feel their work has gone of the boil of late, and we hope you can continue without too many interruptions. Keep up the good work!

***Throw in:** Paul expertly manages to recreate the action of the beautiful game*

***Teach an old dog new tricks:** Paul's break from art didn't hinder his creativity*

Creative confusion

In our immense excitement at the arrival of Volume 2 of the *Photoshop Creative Collection* bookazine last issue, we accidentally printed a picture of Volume 1 instead! The second edition is now on sale from **www.imagineshop.co.uk** and covers the best bits of *Photoshop Creative* from issue nine upwards. So to set you straight, here's what the fabulous Volume 2 looks like.

***Snow scene:** It's this distinctive style that has helped Paul secure his own solo exhibition*

FORUM CHALLENGE

Forum challenge

A few months back the *Photoshop Creative* forum suffered a bit of neglect, and the official Forum Challenge fell by the wayside. We're pleased to report, however, that our loyal forum-goers battled courageously on through the hard times and created their own unofficial Forum Challenge with great success. After much online voting and deliberating, a winner was decided and PixelMonkey took the title with his Valentine-inspired creation.

It's great to see the *Photoshop Creative* online community rally together and create such a successful competition. Well done to **revjessecuster** for initiating it, and to **Medley** who generously donated a $25 iTunes card to the winner. Great teamwork and the entries were brilliant.

***Barbed wire heart:** PixelMonkey created this unofficial Forum Challenge winner – well done!*

View from the forum

User: Rosie
Topic: New moderator
For those of you who don't know already, we have a new moderator on the forum. A big welcome to revjessecuster, who will be looking out for any online naughties that appear.

User: revjessecuster
Topic: New moderator
hehheeh yay – thanks – came as a huge shock/ surprise to me!!

User: Sedim
Topic: New moderator
Just wanted to congratulate you on becoming a mod – have fun with it!

User: deci
Topic: New moderator
Don't let us down Rev, we campaigned long and hard for one of the commoners to be modded. Nice to see they listened… Thanks IP

TALK TO US! | EMAIL US YOUR THOUGHTS TO PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

eMag

issue twenty-two

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Discover how layer styles and layer blends help to create a realistic tennis ball

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On the CD
More free resources

Find out what lovely resources are on this issue's disc. You'll be amazed by the amount of freebies!

94

Exhibit
Reader showcase

Check out whether your work is gracing the pages of *Photoshop Creative* this issue

Creative hub

The latest news stories for the Photoshop community

What's hot this month

WANT SOMETHING FOR NOTHING?

Then look no further than Imagenomic. The company is offering a series of supplemental guides called actionBooks to enhance the use of its software suite and help users maximise the features. See **www.imagenomic.com** for more details.

D&AD CHIEF STEPS DOWN

With the D&AD award winners about to be announced (at the time of going to press) D&AD chief executive Michael Hockney has announced he intends to step down: "One of the great things about working at D&AD is the support and time willingly given by leading creatives. It's been a privilege to work with them."

A HIGH PRICE TO PAY

It looks like UK customers of the new Adobe products might be expected to pay a lot more than their American peers after pricing was revealed by Adobe. This news comes just months after Vista Ultimate, the premium version of Microsoft's new OS, was priced in the UK

at more than double the retail price in the US.

TOP STORY: PHOTOSHOP CS3

Making big waves

Adobe's largest software release in 25 years causes waves in the creative world

March saw the announcement of Adobe's largest software release in its 25 year history, and with it a revolution in creative workflows.

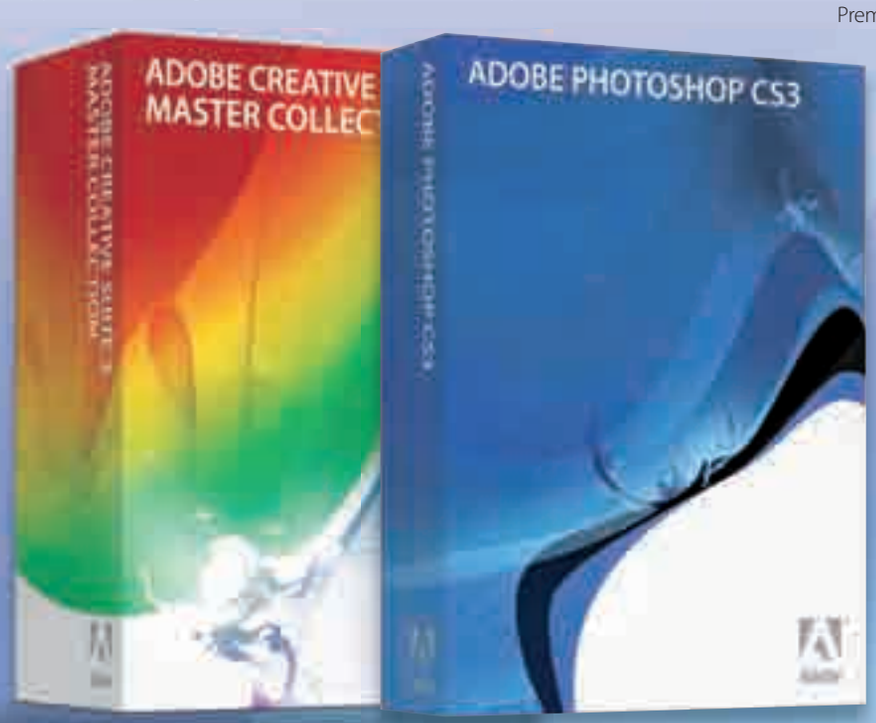
Uniting the best of Adobe and Macromedia, the new Creative Suite 3 offers industry-leading design and development tools for every creative need with the six new configurations.

Heading up the batch is the Creative Suite Master Collection. Combining 12 of Adobe's new design and development applications in a single box, this launch is the most comprehensive creative package offered. The other configurations include Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Premium and Design Standard editions, Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Premium and Web Standard editions, and Adobe Creative Suite 3 Production Premium.

"Creative Suite 3 is the biggest launch in Adobe's 25-year history and a milestone for the creative industry," said Bruce Chizen, chief executive officer at Adobe. "This release reflects the powerful integration between Adobe and Macromedia and how our products bridge the gap between designers and developers. With new workflows that streamline collaboration and impact the development of rich content, designers and developers now have the creative licence to engage audiences across virtually every medium."

Each of the new editions integrates different configurations of Adobe's creative products to serve a breadth of design needs: Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Premium delivers an essential toolkit for print, web, interactive and mobile design, while Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Standard focuses on professional print design and production. Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Premium combines the leading web design and development tools, and Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Standard serves the professional web developer. Adobe Creative Suite 3 Production Premium, meanwhile, is a complete post-production solution for video professionals. Lastly, Adobe Creative Suite 3 Master Collection enables customers to design across all media – print, web, interactive, mobile, video and film.

For more information about features, upgrade policies and pricing visit **www.adobe.co.uk**.



Adobe Creative Suite Master Collection includes 12 new applications in one box, and is the most comprehensive package offered in Adobe's latest software release, Photoshop CS3

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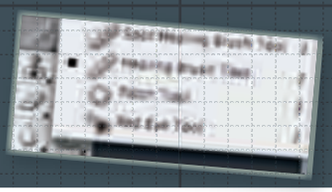
Adobe Photoshop A-Z

A special series working through the best features of Photoshop

H IS FOR HEALING BRUSH TOOL

One of the most common uses for Photoshop is to correct imperfections in images. The Healing Brush tool lets you do just this, causing those minor irritations to disappear into the surrounding photo. The Healing Brush tool matches the texture, lighting, transparency and shading of the sampled pixels to the pixels being healed, giving the healing tool a plus point over cloning tools.

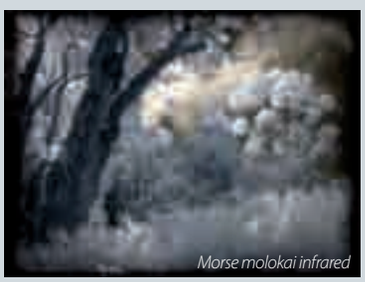


NAPP Gurus announced

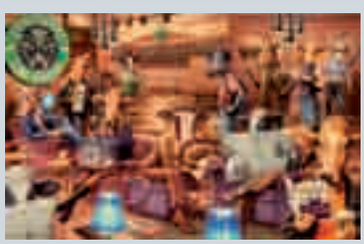
Lucky winners of east coast Photoshop World Guru Awards revealed

For US readers who attended Photoshop World in Boston, the announcement of the Guru award winner will be of great interest. Exclusively for attendees of the show, the awards were created to recognise the innovation and creativity of Photoshop users. Conceived in 1999, they are one of the most prestigious in the digital imaging industry.

Winners include Scott Montgomery in the Artistic category with *Stewart Island*, Daniel Johnson for his illustration work with *Shoreline Construction*, and Best in Show was Matt Zumbo's *Cowbucks Poster*. Felix Nelson, Photoshop User art director, said: "Picking Guru Award winners is always a challenge, and this time was no exception due to the many extraordinarily talented Photoshop artists, photographers and designers who entered. Works selected as winners showed true creative vision and innovation." **www.Felixphotoshopuser.com/guru**



Morse molokai infrared



Zumbo – Cowbucks

CS3 DEVICE CENTRAL

DEVICE CENTRAL

Making mobile content creation simpler and quicker with CS3

We are learning more and more about the new features in Creative Suite 3, and one we're excited to hear about is Adobe Device Central – which is a new integrated component that accelerates and simplifies mobile content creation.

Integrated across the Creative Suite family, as well as in the Web and Production Premium additions and individual products, Device Central has been designed with the creative professional in mind. Boosting efficiency and productivity, the new feature will help imagers who develop dynamic and engaging interfaces, mobile assets, applications and video content for mobile phones and hand-held consumer electronic devices.

"Creative professionals are currently spending more than half their budget and time on testing mobile content on multiple handsets and mobile devices," said Al Ramadan, senior vice president, Mobile and Device Solutions at Adobe. "Adobe Device Central CS3 empowers designers to cut through the complexity of a fragmented mobile landscape and create engaging, optimised content dramatically faster than before."

Pricing looks sets to be around £1,409 for the Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Premium. For detailed information on the product visit **www.adobe.co.uk/creativesuite.**

EXPOSURE

Get your work seen

ADOBE PHOTOSHOP SHOWCASE

www.photoshopshowcase.com

Made with Photoshop Elements users in mind, Adobe Photoshop Showcase allows users to display and share their artwork, Flash creations or anything else they're proud of. The site enables both public and private browsing as well as comments and ratings.

DIGIKITTEN.COM

www.digikitten.com

This well designed and great looking website is easy to navigate and has all you need for an active online life. As well as games, Digikitten includes an active Photoshop Tennis community, radio and of course a gallery to showcase your work. It's aimed at designers, artists, photographers and illustrators alike.

Updates... THIS MONTH IN SHORT

New additions to the world of Photoshop

Machine Wash Image Filter 2.0

For Photoshop and Elements users, the new version of plug-in Machine Wash Image Filter from XChange Int. will be welcome. Version 2.0 can be used for high-res print projects plus screen-res web jobs. When you need a textured look, these filters provide endless options. **www.xchangeuk.com**

PhotoFract 2

PhotoFract is essential for all computer artists, and helps create stunning backgrounds, and adds beautiful reflections and light effects to images. The Fractal Explorer tool lets users easily explore the imaginary world, with the ability to zoom in, change Julia Points and instantly tune the effect with a Gradient palette. **www.xchangeuk.com**

ALERT! | DON'T FORGET TO ENTER OUR READERS' CHALLENGE – SEE PAGE 98

Make a date

At a loose end? Here are the must-see events this month

5-6 JUNE
ADOBELIVE!
Now in its fourth year, Adobe lovers won't want to miss this free two-day conference and exhibition. Discover the power of the new suite and unleash your potential. **www.adobe.co.uk**

31 MAY -23 JUL
FREE RANGE
Visit Europe's largest graduate art and design show and see up-and-coming names in the Photoshop/creative worlds. On for two months, the event showcases star students. **www.free-range.org.uk**

12-13 JUNE
GC 2007 EXPO
Catch up on the latest technology advances at 2007's GC Expo. One of the largest gatherings for the public sector ICT community in the UK, it's one for the tech-heads. **www.gcexpo.com**

Two of the best… PLUG-IN SITES

Twisting Pixels

www.twistingpixels.com

Looking for a plug-in to extend your creative options? Then this is the place to stop. Boasting imaging apps that provide photo-realistic visual solutions to enhance design and photography, the filters are built upon an interactive framework that lets users draw onscreen and manipulate images in a dynamic, easy-to-follow way.

The Photoshop Roadmap

www.photoshoproadmap.com

This really is a one-stop shop for all Photoshop users. As well as plug-ins in the categories of free, artistic, lighting effects, photography and special effects, this site offers a wealth of other features. From Photoshop tutorials and downloads to books and blogs, you'll find all your resource needs here.

REVIEWS

Everyone's welcome, so why not have a look?

MyPhotosoft.com launches

Although Photoshop is the tool of choice for all great creative professionals, other digital photo software is also sometimes required.

For those of you looking for a new piece of kit for your toolbox, MyPhotosoft.com provides an exclusive series of reviews on programs and plug-ins, making your purchasing decision easier.

Registered users will be able to access tutorials for all the programs, as well as have the ability to upload their efforts with each software to a gallery and add articles or tutorials of their own, plus personal comments and evaluations.

Nataly Tikhonovich, the MyPhotosoft editor, explains the idea behind the site: "This site started with the first single step of any journey – buying a digital camera. The first thing I did with my pictures was try to remove the red eye effect. First with the camera's accompanying software, then, naturally, with Photoshop. The new facilities and knowledge were coming to me as an avalanche – adjusting colours, shooting raw and converting; learning the myriad of possibilities Photoshop provides. You try them. You learn more and more, and at some point people around you start saying, 'That's great! How did you do it?'

"That's when I thought of sharing observations, thoughts, knowledge and ideas with others. Not only with those who are around, but with all kinds of people everywhere."

The site has free registration, so why not check it out and see what you can learn?

*You'll find a collection of very useful tutorials at **myphotosoft.com** to accompany the reviews*

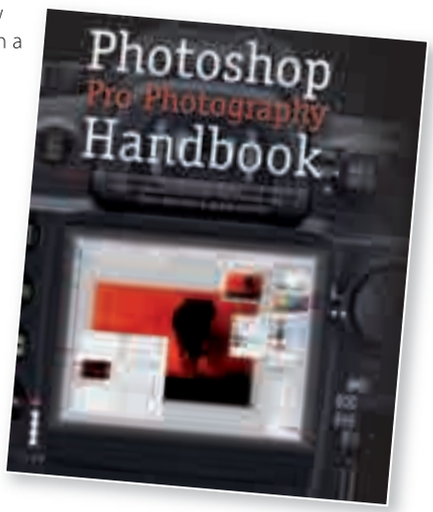
TRAINING

This new read focuses on the features CS3 offers

New Photoshop guide

From June this year, a new tome for Photoshop users with a flair for photography will be available. With over 250 pages and a massive 750 images, this looks set to be a visual extravaganza.

Photoshop Pro Photography Handbook (SRP £24.99) from ILEX is the follow-up to the hugely successful title, *The Digital SLR Handbook*. Written with the prosumer photographer in mind, this offering covers new features introduced in Adobe Photoshop CS3 in a very concise way.



Understanding that photographers need to get up to speed quickly, this is an indispensable guide to correcting, enhancing and manipulating your photographs digitally.

Even those who have little experience in the Adobe application will find this book a useful resource, containing comprehensive explanations of the tools and techniques of basic image enhancement, with strong emphasis placed on the new Photoshop features which are of key importance – such as the new Adobe Bridge file management system.

This looks set to be a must-have for every creative's coffee table.

The team's wish list

Pure material delight…

HueyPro

Reach your potential by making sure that all of your computers are working to the same tune. HueyPro monitor calibration helps to improve colour clarity and consistency across multiple CRT, laptop and LCD displays. With this device users can guarantee consistent results.

We want it because…

With a retail selling price starting at just £59, this device can make your entire creative life a little bit easier. It's also petite – about the size of a marker pen – so it will not ruin the look of any studio setup.

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Little Hawkeye 2 *Susi's neighbour, Cassa Marie Smith was the pretty little model who helped Susi win the NAPP award*

THE STORY BEHIND...

Susi Lawson

Miss Fortune *Susi created this textured background with a pattern layer and blend mode*

Photoshop has enabled Susi to develop her unique sense of style and produce award-winning work and worldwide recognition

Susi Lawson is a fine art photographer, capturing captivating expressions on camera and transforming them into dream-like artwork using Photoshop. She recently won the Grand Prize title of the worldwide NAPP Photoshop User Awards. Here she tells us where she draws her inspiration from…

How did you become interested in photography and art?

I can't think of a time when I wasn't interested! Being an artist isn't something I thought of becoming – it was always who I was. I believe we're influenced by the 'time' of our childhood. I was a child in the Sixties, and what better time to excite and stir the young artist! The musicians were song writers, poets, singers, painters and political activists. There was a strong message that the world could be changed, or at least the awareness of needed change could be stirred by the creation of art and music. Art is the only language that can be 'spoken' anywhere without the need of an interpreter, and that's powerful stuff!

What inspires you most?

I love blue sky and beautiful white clouds. I think the meditative quality of looking up at the sky fuels creative juices. But inspiration can be a flighty thing, and it's hard to name the origin. It can be a dream, a song, an overheard argument, a child's laughter, or it can simply light on your shoulder like a butterfly and all you can do is smile and get to work with where that moment of clarity and serendipity leads you. There are times you just have to hold out your hand like a trusting child being lead to a hidden treasure.

What excites you about Photoshop and which are your favourite tools?

I love the fact that it lets me have every tool at my fingertips. I was a traditional artist, and to have the brushes and textures in a menu on my monitor is heaven! There's no mess, no odour, no cleaning… but I still keep a sketch book under the seat in my car. I also love that the software remains fresh and never boring, as there's so much to explore and experiment with. It's like sitting at an easel with an empty canvas, and no matter where your creativity takes you, Photoshop will have the tools to get you there. Add a Wacom tablet and it's sheer nirvana! The Airbrush is the tool I use most – perfect for smoothing skin, creating hair or clouds, and giving a polished, clean illustrative look. The freeform Pen is also my favourite for a vector illustrative look.

Which award did you win and why do you think you won it?

I won Best in Show in the worldwide Adobe Photoshop Competition sponsored by NAPP. I was shocked to have won the top award and thought the email was a prank! As for why, you'd have to ask the judges. Looking at the talent shown by the other category winners, I'd say it was very close.

How do you set about deciding what goes into your DVDs?

My first DVD *Portrait Magic* was created after I started to get loads of emails asking for tips on how I create my images. I was helping people every night into the wee hours, and it was frustrating, as trying to teach a visual skill with mere words just doesn't work. I realised I needed to get the lessons into a visual format and also to charge, as I was burning a lot of hours. I didn't mind sharing 'secrets', but could see this was another direction for my art. What I include has been through requests from emails. *Portrait Magic* is 15 lessons on painting a portrait in Corel Painter IX and Photoshop, and after it was released I received many emails asking for tutes on my airbrush and vector-style work in Photoshop – so I produced my second DVD of 15 lessons, *100% Photoshop Magic*.

What projects are you working on?

I've taken lots of pics of my little neighbour, nine-year-old Cassa Marie Smith, and my work with her has been well received. That's Cassa in the *Little Hawkeye* image that won me the NAPP prize. I'm thinking of including her images in a children's book or digital art book. I'm also working on a free mother's day shoot for low income single Mums and their children, as I think it's vital to give back to the community. My portrait photography is part of an exhibit titled *Faces of Poverty in Virginia*, an appeal to raise minimum wage and awareness of the working poor. And I'll be putting together a third lesson DVD and will let customer emails guide me on this one too.

Golden Egg *Susi combined a studio shot with an image taken in the local countryside to create this final image*

Susi's five tips for success

01 Although it's great to learn from others, try not to imitate someone else – find your own style.

02 Don't be afraid to experiment with the tools. You're not wasting paper or paint, so experimentation is free. HAVE FUN!

03 Read magazines such as this one, but don't be intimidated by the work you admire. Let it inspire you to create your own!

04 Buy a Wacom tablet! This is essential for creative control and flow.

05 Don't expect to know every tool in Photoshop overnight. That's the quickest way to giving up! As a traditional artist, I never went to an art store to buy everything I saw – and it's the same with software. You'll learn what tools work for you and your style of creating; there may be some you never care about and that's okay.

WEB | SEE MORE OF SUSI'S WORK AT HTTP://SUSILAWSONPHOTOGRAPHY.BIZ

5 ways to present your work

We show you how to create a modern portfolio to perfectly suit your needs, either online or in printed form

Creating a portfolio of your work is a daunting task, and it's something many photographers and digital artists put off doing. But it doesn't need to be scary. The digital age has brought new methods of presenting your work for any purpose, and we'll be looking at these as well as dispelling any fears you may have about compiling your work into a cohesive presentation.

First things first: what is a portfolio? 'Portfolio' comes from the French term 'porte folio'; 'porte' means to carry, and 'folio' refers to a large page roughly the size of a newspaper page – so its literal meaning is 'page carrier'. Traditionally, a portfolio is a device designed to carry loose pages of work, but these days the term encompasses a far wider variety of presentation methods. You could use a photo-sharing site such as Flickr (**www.flickr.com**), which enables anyone to show off their creations with a minimum of effort. If a more professional web presence is needed, the ease with which a site can be created means images can be presented immediately and professionally to an audience anywhere on the globe.

This doesn't mean that traditional portfolios are dead – binding and printing services and art supply stores still do a solid business. Photobooks, for example, are a great and simple way to set up a portfolio, with one company printing and displaying your work in a professionally bound book. You can also choose to get your images printed by a dedicated printing service for the highest quality, or experiment with printing yourself using the wealth of printers saturating the market. The printed sheets can then be bound, left loose in a portfolio box or inserted into a hardback portfolio book. Finally, you could create portfolio pages in Photoshop and transform them into a PDF package that can be emailed or uploaded to the web. The choices are endless and we'll be looking at some of them over the next seven pages.

No matter how you choose to set up your portfolio, remember that it's not only the work being judged, but also you as the artist. Your creative vision and technical expertise need to shine through, and originality will gain you extra points.

There are a number of things you need to bear in mind. Every portfolio needs a definite goal and purpose. Determining this will help you identify your potential audience, and this will influence your content, theme and presentation method.

So what is the purpose of your portfolio? Maybe you just want to share pics with friends and family, detailing a holiday, a wedding or other significant event. Photo-sharing services are ideal for this, as you can upload images to sites like Flickr, Kodak Gallery (**www.kodakgallery.co.uk**) or PhotoBox (**www.photobox.com**), and invite people to view your work online.

It could be you want to let other creatives see your work or show off what you can do, for which a personal site is the solution. If you're a pro photographer or digital artist, you can adapt the site to offer sales info and contact details for potential clients. If you need to give a presentation, maybe to a gallery or business that you'd like to display your work, a hard copy of your portfolio is essential, as the quality of your work can be scrutinised in more detail. Entries to awards and competitions can have different criteria, and you may need to present your portfolio in a digital or a printed format, so your presentation method will be dictated by the terms and conditions set out by the organising body.

Take some time to really think about what you want to achieve from your portfolio. What is your aim? What do you hope to be the result of people seeing it – an offer of work, a gallery exhibition or admiration? Finally, who is going to be viewing your portfolio?

This last question leads us on to the concept of your audience, as this will help you decide on the portfolio's content. Your audience can be one person, a group, a company or hundreds of people. But it's not the number that matters so much as who they are. A company or client you're hoping to work with will need a very different treatment to friends and family.

"No matter how you choose to set up your portfolio, you need to remember that it's not only the work being judged, but also you as the artist. Your creative vision and technical expertise need to shine through"

Bear your audience in mind when selecting images for the portfolio. Which should they see and which would be better left out? Is there going to be one audience or do you need to cater for different audiences? What response do you hope to get? Do you want to shock, challenge, create debate, get a laugh, surprise, impress? Planning is key: think about what your audience expects to see from you, listing key words and phrases that are relevant. Refer to this when planning the content of your portfolio.

It's vital to have a theme, whether this just means keeping all photos from one holiday together or something more profound. You might be tempted to create a 'best of' portfolio, but often this can be a difficult challenge, partly because it's hard to be objective about your own work, plus it can seem pretentious to present the work you think is best. It's much better to group together the best images within a certain theme.

Having a theme means you're taking your audience on a journey rather than handing them a glorified photo album. The connection between your images can be a situation, a place or the visual exploration of an emotion such as love. Within your theme, the images should be ordered so they tell a story of sorts, which could be the development of the theme or mood, or simply placing them chronologically. You may need to talk your audience through the images, and placing them in the right order will make your verbal explanation much easier.

If you do various types of photography or artwork, consider creating a different portfolio for each theme. On a website, for example, you can easily create folders for different themes, which will make you seem far more professional and organised. Your portfolio could showcase images taken at a specific time, in a certain place or introduce something different to your usual line of work.

It's not just themes that should be kept separate: avoid mixing images of different formats. In terms of photography, this would mean keeping digital camera images away from scanned film images. Also, don't mix black and white and colour unless you have a very good reason. However, it's good to vary images within your theme to keep your audience interested – such as placing close-ups next to wide-angles or having different coloured works next to each other.

In terms of content, your portfolio should contain more than just images. There should be an artist's statement explaining what you're trying to show through your presentation, as well as a bit about yourself. It's also good to have a page of thumbnails of all the included images, as a kind of visual index page. One image should be selected to be the

cover image, and it should all be contained within an attractive and easy-to-navigate presentation, whether printed or online.

When selecting your cover image, you need to pick something that's strong on its own but also represents the theme as a whole. It's one of the most important aspects of the project because it's what your audience will see first, and from that they should be able to judge you as an artist. Anything you can do to make your work stand out, such as including music that complements your art or an original portfolio case, will help you get noticed.

The images themselves need to work well on their own and within the portfolio. This means they should be unflawed and technically accurate. There's no point presenting flawed images, as this will appear lazy. Whether printed or online, keep the quality as high as possible, and if you're planning on selling your images, make sure each picture is clearly numbered, dated and titled. If you're printing the images, try to print them at A4 or letter size for the best impact.

This leads us on to the incredibly difficult task of actually selecting the images for your portfolio. The perfect number is between ten and 20. On photo-sharing sites for showing to friends, you can get away with a lot more, but generally your audience will get bored with looking at pictures after 20. Always keep your purpose, theme and audience in mind when selecting images, and don't have similar pics – it's a waste of space, so put similar images next to each other and then select the best.

Before beginning the selection process, make sure you've already gone through all your work and got rid of imperfect images, so you only have high-quality ones to choose from. Also, decide how many images will work best for your portfolio. If you're presenting to a client, you'll want to show what you can do within ten images, whereas a personal website will probably have nearer 20.

With this in mind, here's how to go about selecting the final pictures. First go through your images and whittle them down to around 100 of your best efforts within your chosen theme. Take a break for at least a day, then go back through your selections and cut the number of pictures in half. Following another break – which is essential so you approach the images with fresh eyes – make your final selection, checking the quality as you go, even doing test prints if necessary.

When you're happy, ask a friend, family member or fellow creative to judge your selection. It's hard to be detached from your own work, so advice from an unbiased third party is essential. When you've got your final selection sorted, it's time to put the images in order and present them in your chosen manner.

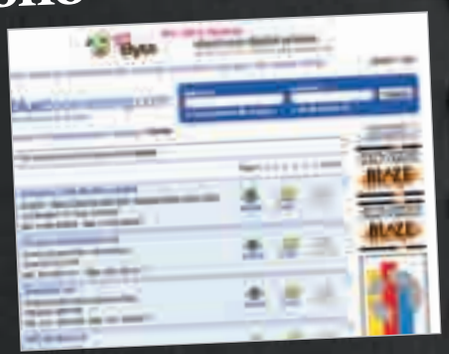
A portfolio takes time to complete, but it's a really great way of analysing what you've accomplished in your art to date. It can also help you to focus on the future and set goals for developing your skills. No two portfolios are ever alike, and they're great to look back on in a few years' time to see how you've progressed. So what are you waiting for?

The traditional portfolio

For those who prefer to take a traditional approach to creating a portfolio, there are still plenty of options. Printing and binding services are available in every town, and the benefit is that you can go into the store yourself and make sure you are getting exactly the service you require. It's not a cheap service by any means, but you get professional quality book binding as well as options to engrave the cover, add captions and an artist's statement to the contents, plus a wide choice of finishes.

Creating a portfolio

01 Printing
Simply doing a Google search for 'professional printing' will turn up a whole host of printing services that will do a lab-quality job on your work. Local stores can sometimes be the best bet because you can explain your needs, but good online services include **www.digitalab.co.uk**, which does printing for exhibition and display sizes. Images can be emailed, uploaded to an FTP or posted.



02 Binding
Often the company that you use for your printing service will offer binding as well, but this is not always the case. Use the Yellow Pages (**www.yell.com**) or a service such as **www.blueboomerang.com** to locate a binding service near you. Prices are usually on request, and there may be discounts for bulk orders.

What will it cost?
Printing (www.digitalab.co.uk)

A4 Digital Machine Print (order more for discount)	£3.25
A4 Hand Print (order more for discount)	£11.50

Print Box is another alternative to a traditional portfolio

Printing at home

Professional printing does give great quality, but the costs involved can soon mount up, and if you are creating your first portfolio there are cheaper options available. Home printers have come on in leaps and bounds recently, and you can get lab-quality results that will last for generations. With top-quality papers and long-lasting inks, you're easily able to get results in your own home that will rival those from professional printing services. Prices range from sub-£100 budget models to high-end models costing many hundreds, with A4 printing almost as standard. With the excellent range of portfolio boxes and files available from art supply stores, you can create a quality portfolio yourself. Alternatively, take your newly printed pages to a local binding shop, and you can have the pages seamlessly bound together at a very reasonable price.

Home printers

01 Stylus Photo R2400

Manufacturer: Epson **Price:** £600
Contact tel: 0870 241 6900
Website: www.epson.co.uk
You'll get eight-colour professional printing from this high-end model. Capable of borderless prints from 6 x 4" to A3+, it will cater for all portfolio needs. It's not the cheapest option, but the quality of prints means that you can make a real impression if you are using your portfolio to attract clients.

02 Photosmart C6180 All-In-One

Manufacturer: HP **Price:** £250
Contact tel: 0870 010 4320 **Website:** www.hp.co.uk
This is 'the world's fastest photo all-in-one' and it produces lab-quality prints in as little as 12 seconds. It uses six individual HP Vivera inks, which should prevent fading over time. This is a good budget option for printing portfolio pictures, with the added bonus of being an all-in-one device.

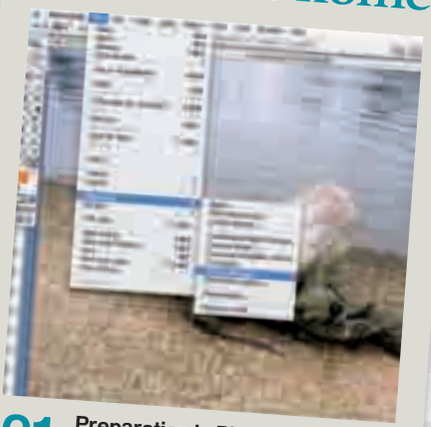
03 High-Definition All-In-One Photo Edition

Manufacturer: Lexmark **Price:** £85
Contact tel: 0870 444 0044
Website: www.lexmark.co.uk
High-quality photos up to 4,800dpi and in sizes from 6 x 4" to A4. Using Lexmark ink and photo paper, images should last for generations, making it a great option for printing your portfolio pages. Six-colour ink technology and a high-definition scanner in a sleek, professional device – an absolute bargain.

04 PIXMA iP5200

Manufacturer: Canon **Price:** £120
Contact tel: 0870 514 3723 **Website:** www.canon.co.uk
6 x 4" and A4 prints at lab quality, up to 9,600 x 2,400dpi. ChromaLife 100 system for long-lasting results, and includes a tray for DVD/CD printing, which is a great touch if you want to keep a DVD/CD copy of your portfolio as well as a printed copy. The single-ink system is economical and easy to change.

Printing your pictures at home



01 Preparation in Photoshop

The biggest problem with printing at home is that your image dimensions might not match the size of your paper. This means that some clipping could occur. The best thing to do is go to File>Automate>Picture Package, which will help you lay out your pages.

02 Layout options

Choose your paper size from the options on the left of the dialog box. This will give you a choice of different layouts, which are previewed in the right-hand window as you make adjustments. You can also customise the preset layouts by hitting Edit Layout underneath this window. When you're finished, you can print this as usual.

Creating your own web page

These days you don't need a degree in web design and a talent for complex HTML coding to create your own website as a means to showcase your talents. There are dedicated portfolio websites that enable you to create an original site within minutes. These are not to be confused with photo-sharing sites such as Flickr (**www.flickr.com**), which are great for uploading and storing large quantities of images in order to share your skills with the world. Portfolio sites are designed for aspiring professionals who need their web page to attract clients and sell stock. And these websites have come on in leaps and bounds, offering cutting-edge Flash designs as well as endless methods of customisation. Prices vary, but there are free options, usually limited to only a small number of images, so you can choose a service which will suit your budget. Sites that are worth checking out include Portfolios.com (**www.portfolios.com**), FolioLink (**www.foliolink.com**) and PhotoPortfolios.net (**www.photoportfolios.net**).

> "These days you don't need a degree in web design and a talent for HTML coding to create your own website"

Creating a free website with Portfolios.com

01 Getting started
Portfolios.com is perfect for a first-time portfolio, because it offers a free package which can be upgraded as your needs expand. It has a large community and there are a wealth of digital artists and photographers who have already signed up. In order to get started, go to **www.portfolios.com** and then click on the Set Up My Portfolio button.

02 Fill in the details
Now you need to start filling in the information that will make up your biography on your site. This is pretty standard stuff and can be added to once you're signed up. For now though, enter your email address, URL, username, password and discipline.

03 How much?
Next, you need to choose the type of portfolio that you wish to open. We've gone for the Basic package, which is free and enables you to upload just five images. This is a good place to start, as you can see if you like the service before upgrading to one of the other packages which open up more storage space and customisation options.

05 Your portfolio
You will now see the control centre from which you can look after your portfolio. It's really easy to get around and the options are pretty self-explanatory. You can alter and add to your bio, as well as change your URL if needed. For now though, hit the Upload Samples option to get pictures on your site.

06 File upload
You will now see this screen, from which you need to browse for the image you want to upload. Be aware that with the Basic package your file size is limited to 250KB, so you may need to adjust your images in Photoshop using the Image Size command.

07 File information
Once the image has uploaded, you can fill in essential details regarding shot information, copyright info and keywords. Try to make your keywords as all-encompassing as possible, in order to get more people finding your images. Think laterally as well as literally – for example, some images might narrate a concept such as 'love'.

What will it cost? Portfolios.com
Basic – 5 images
Free
Vinyl – 10 images
$9.95/month or $99.50/year
Leather – 20 images
$21.99/month or$199.50/year
Titanium – 20 images
(plus layout options, highest search rankings and ePromo tools)
$49/month or $249.95/6 months

04 **Finish it up**
Carry on filling in all the required fields (denoted with an asterisk) until you reach the final Sign Up page. You will then see this screen, and the information will also be sent to your email address. Click on the Login link at the bottom of the screen and then enter your username and password details into the dialog box that comes up.

08 **Live on the net**
Once you've filled in all the information, hit Upload. Changes you make and images you upload are live on your site immediately. You can have a look by typing in your URL. Click on the thumbnails of your images to see a larger picture along with image information. Now add more images, and you're done!

Web services

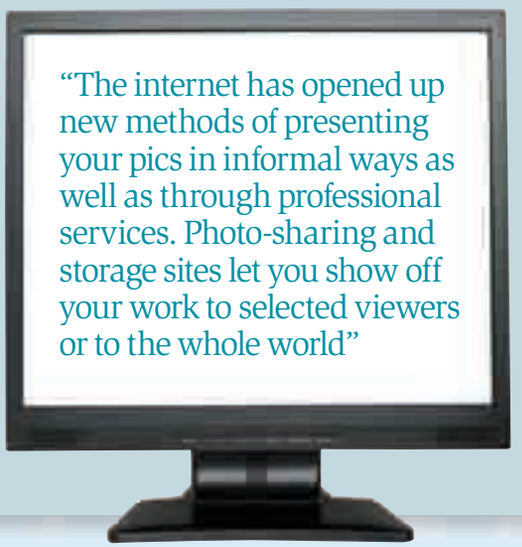
01 **FolioLink**
URL: www.foliolink.com
Cost: From $239/year (plus one-off setup fee)
A sophisticated service that enables you to create a professional-looking website, with Flash-based animations and a large choice of templates. The result is a sleek-looking individual site, though it is a more expensive option. A free trial is available.

03 **Alpha Omega**
URL: www.aplhaomegadigital.com
Cost: From free
This site offers online portfolios for creative professionals. A free site lets you upload eight images; the pay-for option gives you up to 20. The designs are sleek, and you can post plenty of info for potential clients and also customise the site.

05 **Big Black Bag**
URL: www.bigblackbag.com
Cost: From $23.25 (plus one-off setup fee)
Create and manage your own online portfolio website with this site designed especially for creative professionals. There's a free seven-day trial, then you can choose which package you want. It also offers infinite customisation options.

02 **PhotoPortfolios.net**
URL: www.photoportfolios.net **Cost:** $39/year
This site is aimed at those with an interest in nature and travel photography, and when you sign up you choose one discipline or the other. The portfolio enables you to have up to 120 images, although you can purchase more space if needed. Rather than being a personal website, this is more of a chance to sell your work as stock.

04 **PhotoBiz**
URL: www.photobiz.com
Cost: From $25/month (plus one-off setup fee)
A professional web design service designed for photographers. You can update the site via an intuitive control panel, a slideshow is available on your home page, and you can have up to 72 images across four galleries.


"The internet has opened up new methods of presenting your pics in informal ways as well as through professional services. Photo-sharing and storage sites let you show off your work to selected viewers or to the whole world"

Top five online services

01 Cherish
URL: www.cherishworld.co.uk
Cost: Photobooks from £20.
Cherish offers photobooks of all sizes and qualities, costing from £20 up to £100. They come in leather-bound, leather-effect hardcover, suede-effect hardcover, softcover spiral-bound and A3 portfolio spiral-bound. It's incredibly easy to create a photobook, and the results are some the most professional around.

02 Kodak Gallery
URL: www.kodakgallery.co.uk
Cost: Storage free; photobooks from £6; collages from £1.30.
This is a storage/printing site, but Kodak now covers all types of printing and presentation services. Collages hold 4-100 images, in sizes up to 30 x 20". Photobooks come in three sizes with soft or hard covers.

03 PhotoBox
URL: www.photobox.co.uk
Cost: Storage free; photobooks from £20; collages from £20.
Collages available up to 30 x 20" in three templates, same-day posting (before 4pm, Mon-Fri); volume discounts. Photobooks are created via a quick step-by-step process, in four styles, with hardcover – available within three days. Storage/sharing also available.

04 Flickr
URL: www.flickr.com
Cost: Storage free; photobooks from $11.99; collages from $6.99.
Photo-sharing service where anyone can access your pics from anywhere. Hit 'Do more with your pictures' and you can access QOOP for printing services. The US-based service takes up to 25 days to get products to the UK. Collages up to 30 x 40" on photo paper. Photobooks up to 250 pages.

05 Snapfish
URL: www.snapfish.co.uk
Cost: Storage free; photobooks from £13.
Another site designed as a way to share pics across the globe. Now it offers photobook printing in hard/softcovers with a variety of professionally bound styles. Easy to set up, you can adjust your photobook to get it as you want it, adding captions where needed.

These are collages from PhotoBox; arrange photos for amazing posters

A bright and cheerful collection from **www.cherishworld.co.uk**

These PhotoBox posters are available in many styles and colours

Using online services

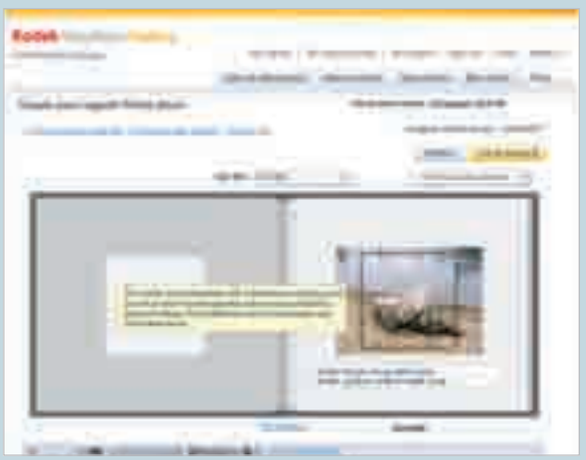
The internet has opened up new methods of presenting your pictures in informal ways as well as through professional services. Photo-sharing and storage sites enable you to show off your work to selected viewers or to the whole world. Other websites offer printing services such as collages, canvases and photobooks, which can be created in minutes. It's the last-named of these that offers the best portfolio option. Photobooks are a unique way to present your images. They are offered on most of the larger photo storage and printing sites, and come in all flavours to suit your budget. More professional portfolios are available from sites such as **www.cherishworld.co.uk**, which presents your images in leather-bound books for around £100. Cheaper varieties are also available from £20, which use spiral binding instead, but they still look great.

Creating a photobook with Kodak Gallery

01 Open an account
You will need to have an account with Kodak Gallery in order to create a photobook. This is easy using the simple registration process. Once your account is set up, upload the images that you wish to use onto the site and you are ready to begin. You'll find the Photo Books option under Shop.

02 Select a style
There are three photobooks to choose from, so browse through the list and see which will best suit your needs. We're going for Regular Photo Book, which offers a hardcover and a choice of single-side and double-side printing (the former is preferable for a portfolio).

03 Choices, choices
Now you can work through the available options, such as choosing a colour, a type of cover, the layout of your images and how many pictures you want to use. When it comes to selecting images, you can simple pick the album that contains all your chosen portfolio pictures.



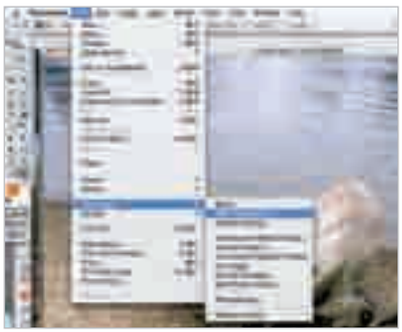
04 And finally…
You will see a mock-up of your book which you can drag and drop your images into. Play with the layout until you are happy with the result. The cost is displayed in the top right. When you're done, hit the Order button and your book will be created and sent to you.

Creating a PDF package

There will probably come a time when you might find yourself needing to present your work to a client or company which uses digital methods – and the best way of doing this is to utilise the universal power of the PDF. This file format can be opened by anybody, anywhere, using the freely available Adobe Reader. Photoshop CS and beyond has an extremely handy PDF Presentation option, which you can use in order to create a PDF-based slideshow of your images. This slideshow can then be emailed or burned to CD or DVD for sending to your selected audience. It is incredibly simple to do this, because it's all thoughtfully walked through step-by-step by Photoshop.

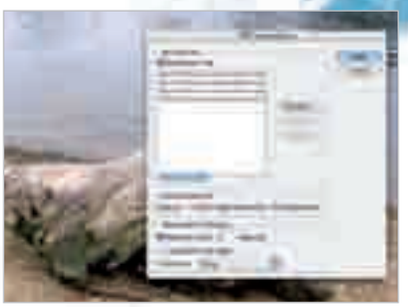
> "Photoshop CS and beyond has a handy PDF Presentation option which you can use to create a PDF-based slideshow"

PDF presentations in Photoshop



01 Open your files
Make sure that all the images you wish to use in your presentation are in one place. Open up all of these in Photoshop. At this stage you should already have done any editing and checked for quality. Go to File>Automate>PDF Presentation to get started.

02 Getting started
This will open up the PDF Presentation dialog box. Click the Add Open Files checkbox in order to use the images that you have already opened in Photoshop. You could also add files directly from here and remove them. You should now see a list of all the images you're going to use in the window.



03 Output options
Next, under the Output options, check the Presentation option. This will enable you to create a slideshow with transitions, which is great for CDs/DVDs. Multi-Page Document requires the viewer to move from slide to slide manually, which might work better for an email presentation as it will cut down on the file size.

04 Presentation options
Now you get to decide how your slideshow will work. Tick Advance Every… Seconds, and enter the interval that you wish your image to stay on-screen for. It's best to increase the default five seconds, as this is not enough time for clients to take everything in. Choose a Transition option from the drop-down menu.

05 PDF options
Click Save. You'll be asked to select a name and location for your PDF file. When you've done this, the Save Adobe PDF box will appear. Here you need to select a PDF preset to print with, and you can also change the compression settings and add a password for security if necessary. When you're happy, hit Save PDF.

06 Finishing off
The PDF will now save, which could take a little time depending on the number of images selected. All that's left to do now is open up the presentation and check that everything works as you would hope. You can now email or burn the file for your clients.

eMag

tutorials

More tantalising tutorials to get those creative juices flowing. Check out the practical image-editing sections as well as the digital art projects that are sure to inspire you

Photoshop Creative_Issue 22

Big technique

Learn how to use Actions 46

Creating actions can dramatically speed up your workflow. Check out how to use this feature here

Focus on...

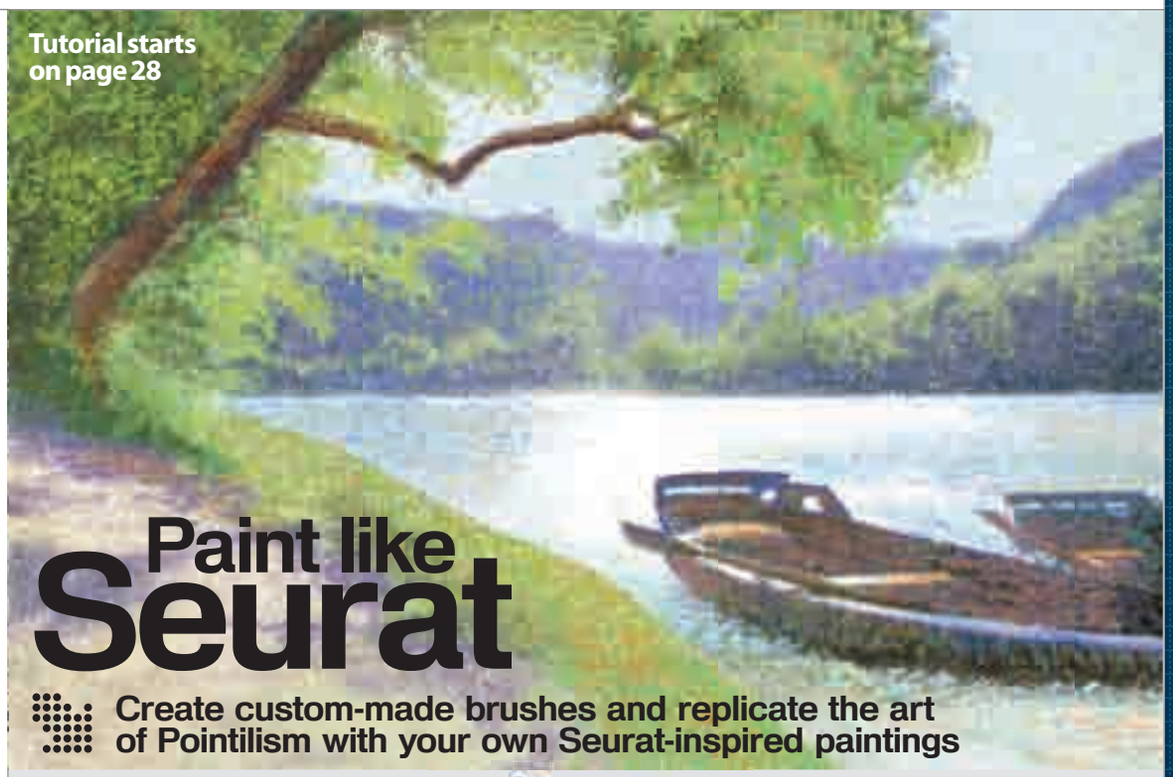
Dodge and Burn 62

Mastering these Photoshop tools will equip you with vital skills to edit any photo or image with precision and ease. We explain exactly how to do it

Cool plug-ins

Twisting Pixels PixelPaper 72

Creating convincing paper textures and effects can be a lengthy and challenging process. Thankfully, a helping hand is here in the form of the PixelPaper plug-in specifically designed to produce a realistic paper effects



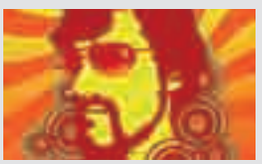
Tutorial starts on page 28

Paint like Seurat

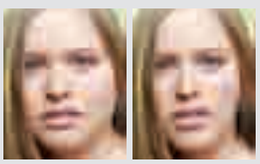
Create custom-made brushes and replicate the art of Pointilism with your own Seurat-inspired paintings

36 Graphics swim off the page

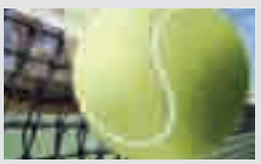
42 Create a DVD sleeve in CS3



50 Sixties psychedelic poster



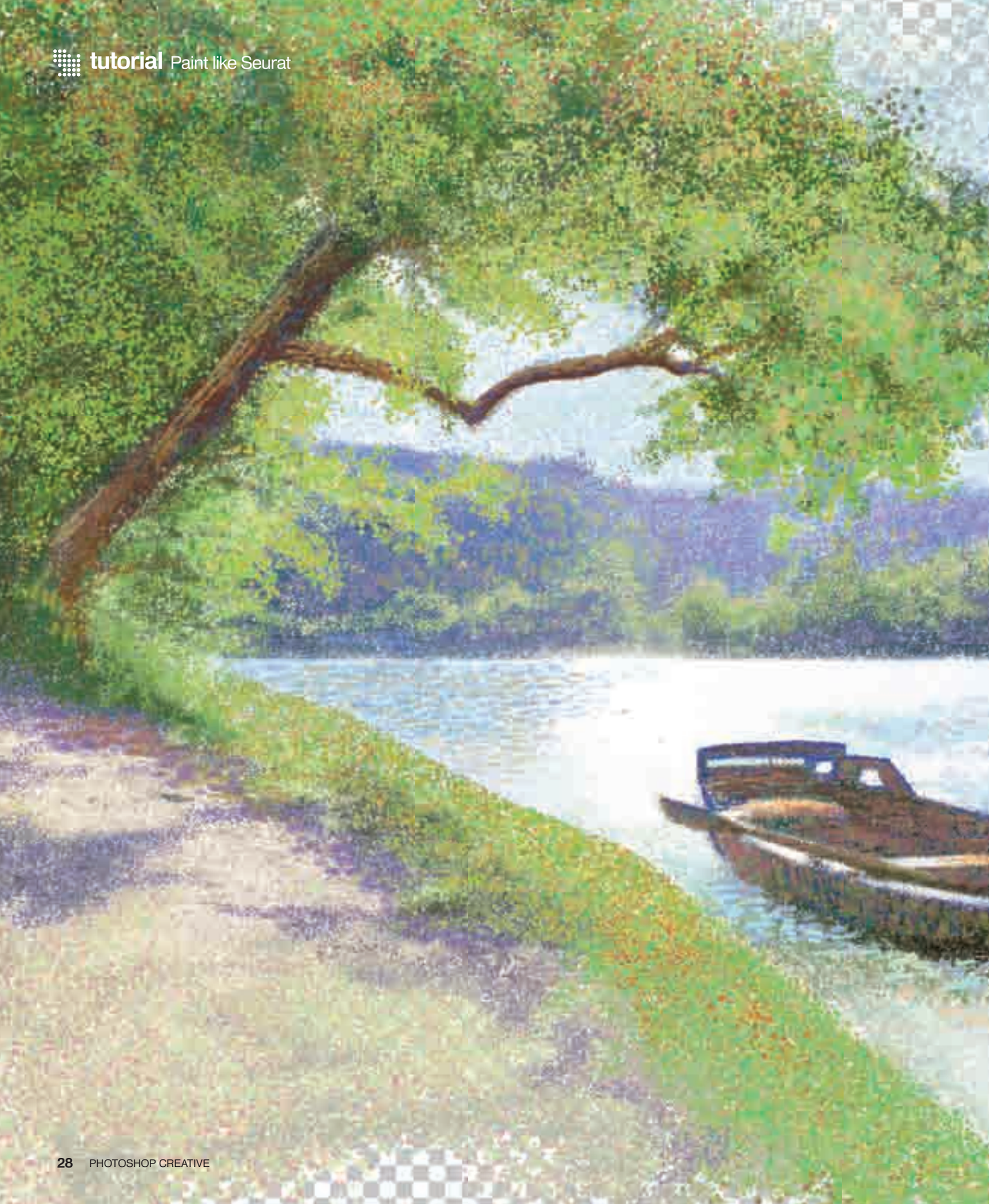
54 Cosmetic surgery school



58 Photo-realistic tennis ball

64 Make your own gift box

CHECK IT OUT! | TUTORIAL RESOURCE FILES CAN BE FOUND ON THE CD – SEE THE INSIDE BACK COVER



Paint like Seurat

You don't have to slap paint on with a trowel to produce dynamic landscape paintings. The great Georges Seurat produced wonderful paintings from nothing but dots!

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

2.5 hours

YOUR EXPERT

Tim Shelbourne

ON THE CD

Seurat1.abr
Seurat2.abr
Seurat_Source.jpg
Seurat_done.jpg

Plus check out the stock images on the CD for more Seurat inspired landscapes. The image used here can be purchased from istock.com image file number 869479869

This month, in another of our 'Paint like…' series, we're going to look at the lost art of Pointilism.

Dating back to the golden age of neo-Impressionism, this unique method of painting is best demonstrated by the work of Georges Seurat – one of the technique's greatest exponents. Pointilism is a way of painting which involves applying countless dots and dabs of paint to the canvas in order to create a complete image. When viewed from a distance, dots of different colours when placed closely together are mixed optically by the human eye to create another colour. This characteristic is the colour science which underpins the technique itself.

Of course, as you would expect, we're not going to be working with paint and canvas here but replicating the effect in Photoshop. One of the greatest advantages of this digital Pointilism method is that we can begin with a digital photograph, which can be used to establish the main elements within the image, and give your Pointilism masterpiece a real kick start, without having to paint millions of individual dots and dabs!

Painting individual specks over the image would be laborious indeed, so we'll make a few simple modifications to a basic Photoshop brush so that it does most of the hard work for us. We'll establish the main elements in the image by painting onto a simple layer mask with this customised brush. The real creativity begins when you use this brush to actually paint with colour. Because of the way the brush is configured, with a pronounced Hue Jitter, as you paint it will flip-flop the colour it applies either side of your chosen foreground colour, giving a real Pointilism effect.

So, simply follow the walkthrough and you can create your own homage to Seurat. Get the point?

WORKS WITH | CS AND ABOVE

Tip

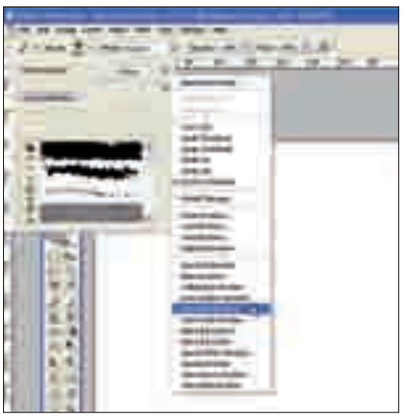
Softer dots

Because we started with a hard-edged brush here, the dots placed by the brush may be a little too stark and definite for your liking. You can easily change this by modifying the brush further. To soften the brush up a little, simply click in the Brush picker, grab the Hardness slider and drag it to the left slightly to soften the edges of the brush.

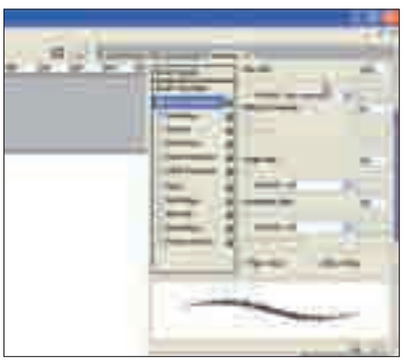
SET THE SCENE

Create a canvas and start on your custom brush

01 Create a canvas Open 'Seurat_start.jpg'. Add a new layer and fill it via Edit>Fill, choosing white for Contents. Now click on the background layer and duplicate it (Ctrl+J). Grab this duplicate layer in the Layers palette and drag and drop it above the filled layer.

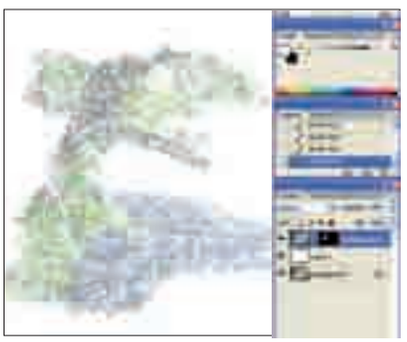


02 Choose a brush library Set the Opacity for this layer to 60%. Next, add a layer mask to this layer via Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All. Now we need to set up the custom brush. Choose the Brush tool and click in the Brush picker. Click on the small right-pointing arrow and choose Dry Media Brushes.



03 Choose a brush Scroll down the list of brush thumbnails and choose the Large Graphite Heavy Flow brush. Hit F5 to display the Brushes palette. Click on Brush Tip Shape and set the Spacing slider to 85%. Click Shape Dynamics and set Size Jitter to 55%.

04 The settings Set Minimum Diameter to 22%, Angle Jitter to 67%, Roundness Jitter to 85% and Minimum Roundness to 35. Hit Scattering, set the Scatter slider to 630%, Count to 2 and Count Jitter to 62%. Uncheck the box for Dual Brush. Exit the Brushes palette and hit D to revert to default foreground/background colours.



05 Paint on the mask Ensure that white is your foreground colour and click directly on the black filled layer mask in the Layers palette. Reduce the Size of the brush to 20 pixels and set Brush Opacity to 100%. Now begin to paint over the canvas, using a tight scribbling motion to begin adding some dots.

06 More dots You need to paint in this way all over the canvas. Make sure you use the same tight scribble over all areas. Don't work on any area for too long, because at this stage we want plenty of white areas showing between the dots of colour revealed from the associated image layer.

07 Duplicate and fill mask Duplicate this layer, complete with layer mask (Ctrl+J). Click directly on the layer mask and go to Edit>Fill, choosing black for Contents. In the Layers palette, increase the Layer Opacity to 100%. Now right-click the layer mask and choose Disable Layer Mask.

08 Saturation and blur Now, in the Layers palette, click on the thumbnail of the image layer next to the layer mask. Go to Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. Grab the Saturation slider and increase the Saturation to +35. Now go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Use a Blur Radius of 5 pixels and click OK.

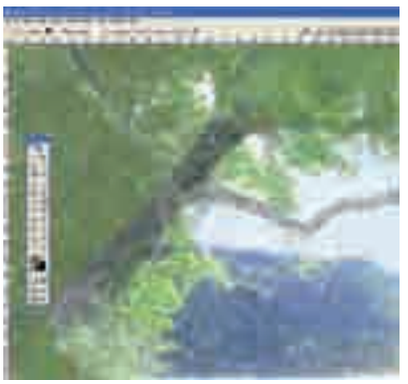
REINFORCEMENT
Add some colour and tone

09 Reinforce the underpainting Right-click the layer mask again and pick Enable Layer Mask. Reduce Brush Opacity to 50%. Now, painting on this layer mask with white as the foreground colour, paint again over distant hills to reinforce the image and add more colour.

10 More intensity Continue to add more brushwork over the whole image. Because the Saturation is increased on the associated image layer, this brushwork will add brighter, more intense dots of colour and tone.

11 Looking skyward! Add a new layer and set its blending mode to Darken. Hit F5 to display the Brushes palette. Click Color Dynamics, grab the Hue Jitter slider and set it to 18%. Click the foreground swatch and choose a light sky blue colour. Now paint some colour over the sky and a little over either side of the water.

12 Dark foliage In the Brushes palette, increase the Hue Jitter to 30%. Add another new layer then set Brush Opacity to 100%. Now choose a dark green for the foreground swatch and begin to paint the foliage in the main tree. Don't paint over the tree trunk.



13 More foliage The shape of the foliage needs to be quite stylized to reflect Seurat's technique. Every now and then modify the size of the brush, varying it between 30 and 50 pixels.

14 Trunk call! In the Brushes palette, reduce the Scatter slider to around 200%. Choose a mid brown colour, and using the brush at 10 pixel size, carefully paint in the tree trunk and the branch.

15 Throwing shadows Choose a dark blue/mauve colour and set the brush to 10 pixel size. Now paint in the shadows on the ground underneath the tree. You can also use this colour to add some more interest to the distant hills and trees.

Tip

Reinforce the tones

When you've finished your image, or at any point during the process, you can easily add a little more depth of tone to your painting, simply by using another background copy layer. Just click on the original background layer and duplicate it (Ctrl+J). Drag this copy layer up in the Layers palette and drop it above the white filled layer. Now, in the Layers palette, reduce this layer's Opacity to around 25%.

Tip

Layer upon layer!

It makes good sense to use lots of layers in this image. Whenever you start painting a new area of colour, give it its own layer, because you can always alter the tone or colour of one area. To alter the tone of an area on a layer, target the layer in the Layers palette and adjust the tones via Image>Adjustment Levels, or change the colour via Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation.

LIGHTEN UP

Add some lighter foliage

16 **Lighter foliage** Add another new layer and choose a light green for the foreground swatch. Set Scatter to around 300%. Still using the custom-made Seurat brush, start to paint in lighter foliage over the dark foliage we already applied to the tree. Again, ensure that the silhouette of the foliage shape is quite round and stylized.

17 **Big dots, little dots** Reduce the size of the brush as you work over the far left of the tree. In the central area of foliage, add a few spots of colour using the brush at 30 pixels size. You'll see a wide variety of colours appear within the dots, due to the Hue Jitter value applied to the brush.

18 **Selection edge** In the Brushes palette, reduce the Scatter value to 200. Choose the Freehand Lasso and draw a selection along the bank to create a hard line along it (see screenshot). Go to Select>Inverse. Switch back to the Brush tool and use the brush at 20 pixels to paint in the green at the edge of the bank, painting up to the outside edge of the selection.

The making of a masterpiece

We reveal the technique behind the inspiration

Light and shade The dark areas painted over the massed areas of the foliage serve as a base and underpainting for the lighter foliage which is added later in the painting. Notice how, although we're using a dark green as the foreground swatch, other colours are introduced via the Hue Jitter within the brush.

Tree trunk and branch The tree trunk and branch are painted in using the same brush, but with the Scatter value reduced so the dots are painted closer together and we can achieve harder edges.

Base colour and shadows The base colour for this area of ground is from the underlying image layer via the layer mask. However, by choosing an appropriate colour, the shadows are actually painted on a layer above, to great effect!

The sky Again, the sky is actually painted onto another layer, and a little of the same colour is added to the water. The advantage of painting these areas on a separate layer is that you can easily alter the intensity of the colour by adjusting the Opacity of the layer.

Pure water It's important that this area of the water is left pure white with no dots or dabs showing at all, in order to give the impression of the sun reflecting off the surface of the water.

CREATE DISTANCE AND VARIETY

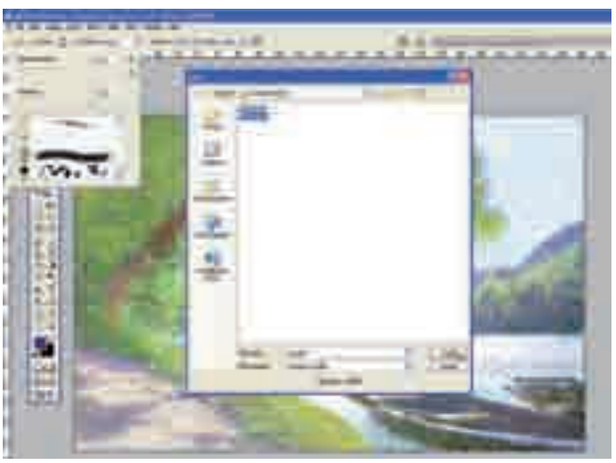
Paint some trees in the distance and give the boats an authentic look

19 **Distant trees** Using the brush at 10 pixel size, and with a slightly darker green, begin to paint in the impression of the distant trees. Use the finished image as a guide for these, and remember you're only painting the lightest parts of these trees here.

20 **The blue yonder** Change to a very light green and add some small areas of highlights to these trees. Add these highlight areas using the brush at just a 10 pixel size. Now choose a mid purple/blue colour and paint over the darker parts of the distant land to give the impression of detail.

21 **Defining darks** Now paint using a selection of dark purples and blues inside both of the boats. You can do this on a separate layer if you prefer. Don't worry too much about where you place the purples and blues; we're using two different colours just to bring a little variety to the dark tones in the boats. Vary your brush size here and there a little.

22 **Another brush** Select the Brush picker and click the small right-pointing arrow. Hit Load Brushes in the menu. Browse to the Seurat2 brush on the cover CD, click on it and hit Load. Now double-click on the Seurat2 brush in the Brush picker. Choose a deep, rich burgundy for the foreground swatch. For the background swatch, pick a mid petrol blue.



23 **Not dots but dabs!** On a new layer, set the Size of the brush to between 20 and 30 pixels. Set the Brush Opacity to 75% in the Options bar. Now begin to add some short dabs of colour to the dark areas of the boats. These dabs need to be placed quite close together, but still with gaps between them.

History of Seurat and Pointilism

It's a common misconception that Seurat was one of the Impressionists, but this is by no means true. To be exact, Seurat's technique was a product of neo-Impressionism. Essentially, Seurat was one of a group of young artists, painting after the time of the great Impressionists, who felt that art and painting should follow the rules of science and colour theory rather than rely on sheer spontaneity and descriptive brushwork. This is how Pointilism was born, a technique which depended on the tendency of the human eye to optically mix two different colours placed side by side to produce the illusion of a third colour. Unlike the Impressionists, who insisted on working in the open air in front of their subject, Seurat painted all of his greatest works in the studio – some of which took years to complete. No surprise, when you consider that his largest works consisted of millions of these hand applied dots of colour!

You'll find plenty of information about Seurat on the internet, and lots of examples of his best works such as *A Sunday on La Grand Jatte, Bathers at Asnieres* and *The Circus*. Try these sites:

www.artelino.com/articles/georges_seurat.asp

www.nationalgallery.org.uk/cgi-bin/WebObjects.dll/CollectionPublisher.woa/wa/artistBiography?artistID=655

Sadly, Seurat died all too soon at the age of 31, after developing diphtheria. After his death, although a few of his followers carried on the Pointillist tradition, the movement and the technique itself soon died out.

BECOME A DAB HAND

A little deft dabbing will make all the difference

24 **Directional dabs** Ensure that these dabs follow the contours of the boats, especially down the side of the foreground boat. Every so often, swap the foreground and background colours by hitting X on the keyboard to apply dabs of the other colour.

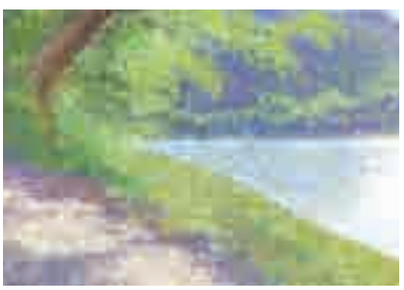
25 **Sharpen with dabs** By using the brush at a very small size, you can use short dabs of petrol blue along the outlines of the boats to sharpen them up. You need to add lots of these dabs all over the boats. Use the finished image as a guide for this.

26 **Branching out** Choose a darker brown for the foreground swatch. Now add some of these short dabs to one side of the tree trunk and branch. As you go, use some of the dabs along the edges to sharpen them, and make sure to follow the direction of the trunk and branch.

27 **Define and sharpen** Choose a light tan colour and add some more short dabs to the other side of the tree trunk and branch. Again, as you go, sharpen up the edges and place the dabs closely together, following the direction of the branch and trunk.

28 **Water detail** Choose a light blue for the foreground swatch and a light warm grey for the background swatch. Now add lots of horizontal dabs to the darker parts of the water. Regularly hit X to swap your foreground/background colours and place dabs of each colour side by side.

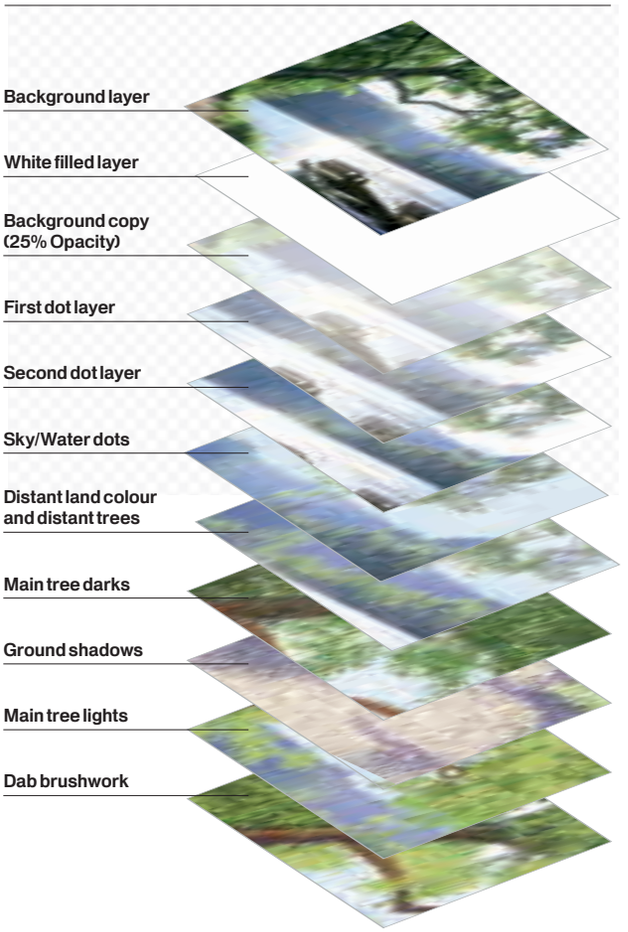
29 **Dabbing in the water** Increase the size of the brush a little and then add some of these dabs over the shadows on the water cast by the boats.



30 **Add and refine** At this stage you can have fun adding these short dabs of colour here and there throughout the painting. Add some light green and light blue dabs to the distant hills, and some blue/violet dabs to the ground at the bottom left. To finish, continue to add more dots and dabs to the image to refine it.

Layer structure

Beneath the dots and dabs



eMag

Make your artwork swim off the page

Create the illusion of 3D with this underwater garden of coral and fish swimming off the page

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
1.5 hours

YOUR EXPERT
Giles Angel

ON THE CD
All the source files

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- MAKING SELECTIONS
- SCALING OBJECTS
- MASKING
- REVEALING SELECTIONS

Have you ever wanted to give your compositions the illusion of 3D? Well, now you can with this sub-aqua tutorial. We'll start with a series of underwater elements: coral, fish, a diver and nature's most important element – water.

Each of these elements will be scaled and blended into a seamless composition. To heighten the sense of depth and three dimensions, some of the fish and coral will be isolated and scaled to flow outside the composition itself. This not only makes the image more lifelike, but gives the picture a more organic feel by breaking up the straight edges.

The Free Transform tool will be used to magnify foreground elements for a wide-angled close-up look. The diver element in the composite will be shrunk to further the feel of distance between him and the foreground elements. We will also make extensive use of masks on many of the layers to partially hide and reveal content and smooth out any sharp edges. In addition, small watery areas will be copied and stretched to build up the sea in the background.

Thanks to Jenny Huang for the use of her images
www.flickr.com/photos/diverslog/216639520/in/photostream/

PHOTOSHOP CS3 | **WORKS WITH**

Tip

Keep an eye on the light

When making an image composite, try and use elements that are taken in the same lighting conditions otherwise they won't marry together effectively. In this case the photography is all front-flashed so the elements work well side by side. Mixing an element that's taken in bright sun with another on a dull day, for example, wouldn't look very realistic.

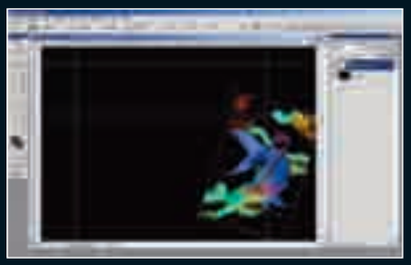
Tip

Consider visual hierarchy

When bringing all your elements together think about how you can create a visual hierarchy. This can be achieved by making elements larger or smaller over others, and through the use of blurring to soften elements which can simulate a shallow depth of field setting on a standard camera lens. Colour desaturation can also help to highlight one area over another.

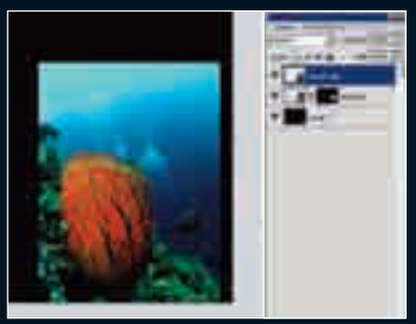
FISHY BUSINESS

Begin to create your virtual aquarium

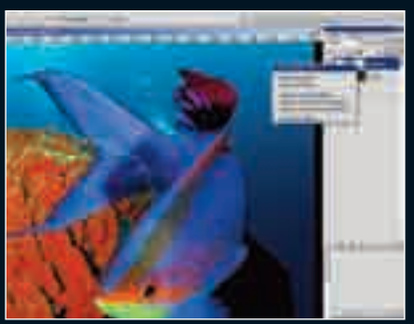


01 Set the scene Open 'frame.psd'. Open 'blue_fish.jpeg', pick the Move tool, drag and drop onto frame.psd. Pick Free Transform, hold Shift+Alt/Opt, and pull on a corner of the bounding box to scale the image up. Release the buttons, move the cursor to the corner, rotate the image to adjust the angle.

02 Isolate the fish Select the Pen tool (P), add points around the blue fish until the path is complete. Right-click/click and hold and pick Make Selection. Use a Feather of 1 pixel. With the selection active, click Add a Layer Mask at the bottom of the Layers palette. This hides background material and isolates the fish.



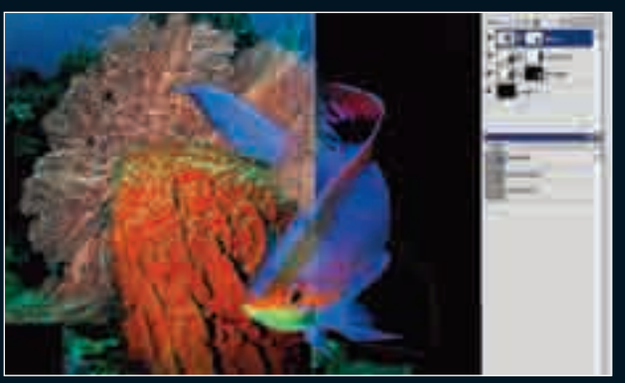
03 Add red coral Open 'coral_red.jpeg' and drag and drop onto the comp image. Position the image behind the fish. Now Ctrl/Cmd-click on the fish mask in the Layers palette to load as a selection. Press Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+I to invert the selection. With the coral layer selected, click on the Add Layer Mask icon to create another mask.



04 Hide the tail – part 1 Now we'll make a selection of the coral and use this to mask out the fish tail behind it. Right-click/click and hold on the coral mask and hit Disable Mask. This hides the fish and allows a path to be made. Make a new path around the coral, then Ctrl-click/click and hold on the mask and enable the mask again.

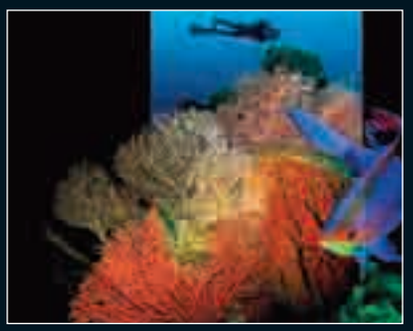
05 Hide the tail – part 2 Load the new path as a selection (Feather 1 pixel), select the coral mask on the red coral layer and pick the Brush tool (B) with white as the foreground in the Color picker on the main Tools palette picker (press D to reset to black and white, and X to toggle the background and foreground colours). Paint inside the selection to reveal the coral in front of the tail.

06 Tidy edges Select the Marquee tool (M) and draw a rectangle around the edge of the guide as shown in the image reference. Select black as the foreground and paint on the coral mask to hide the coral sea area and make the fish spill off the page.



07 Add the diver Open 'diver.jpeg', drag it onto the composition and position it above the blue fish and red coral layer. Now reload the blue fish path as a selection and invert it, then click the Add Layer Mask icon to reveal the tail again. Reload the coral path selection and paint in black on the mask to reveal the red coral again.

08 Add yellow coral Open 'yellow_coral.psd'. This has been cut out to save you time. Drag the cut-out layer to the composite image and position in place. Load the red coral path as a selection. Now invert the selection and load a layer mask on the yellow coral layer to make the red coral stand out in front.



09 Add more red coral Next, open 'coral_red2.psd'. Drag this layer onto the composite image and use the Move tool to position it in the foreground in front of the yellow coral.

10 Add more fish Open 'red_fish.psd' and drag the red fish layer onto the comp document. Drag this layer to the top of the layer stack so it's positioned in front of the red coral. Use the Free Transform tool to scale the fish up in size. Now open 'yellow_fish_01.psd' and 'yellow_fish_02.psd' and dag and drop onto the composite. Scale and rotate the fishes as before, so they look large and in the foreground.

11 Purple and yellow coral Open 'purple_coral.psd' and 'coral_left.jpeg'; drag onto the composite between the fish/diver layers. Free Transform yellow_coral_left.psd, making it smaller. Add a layer mask: 'yellow coral 2'. With the Brush tool (foreground set to black), paint on the mask to reveal the purple layer. Add a layer mask; remove unwanted coral under the red fish.

12 Scale the diver Select the diver layer and unlink the layer image thumbnail with the mask by clicking on the link icon between them. Free Transform the diver image and scale it down. Hold down Shift and drag inwards from the top left-hand corner, so the top edge matches with the guide.

13 Stretch! Pick the Marquee tool and select a vertical slice of sea on the diver layer without the diver. Hit Ctrl/Cmd+J to copy/paste to a new layer. Free Transform the layer and stretch it left to cover the sea. Hold Alt/Opt to distort corners. Add a layer mask, use a soft brush and blend the edges with the background sea. Repeat for yellow coral layer.

14 Adding ripples and finishing off Marquee select some ripples on the yellow coral 2 layer and copy and paste onto a new layer above, then add a layer mask. Now select the Gradient tool. With the mask selected, draw a vertical gradient on the mask to blend out the hard edge. Press Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+Alt/Opt+E to merge the layers onto a new layer. Now use the Clone tool and Healing brush to smooth out stretch marks in the sea.

Tip

Creating that 3D look

Although the composite is made entirely from two-dimensional imagery, by allowing elements to spill outside the main content this breaks up the straight edges and creates an impression of depth. This is further emphasized by exaggerating the scale of the foreground imagery. The diver is greatly outsized by the coral and the fish – this helps draw your eye into the image. How the elements are lit is very important for creating a 3D look. In this case the brightly lit foreground elements frame the darker background elements lit by ambient light.

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- VANISHING POINT FILTER
- TRANSFORM COMMAND
- TEXT TOOL
- LAYER OPACITY

Using the vanishing point in CS3

Two significant improvements have been made to the Vanishing Point filter, and in this tutorial we showcase both of them

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
30 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Matthew Henry

ON THE CD
Blank DVD.jpg
Before DVD.jpg

Working in perspective has always been one of the hardest aspects of painting to master, and wasn't fully realised until the science of vanishing points was employed by Renaissance artists such as Donatello and Masaccio.

The same perspective problems that have stared out of the canvas at artists for centuries now stare out of the screen for masses of struggling retouchers looking to drop in new buildings here and there in a cityscape perhaps, or simply to clone in a new window or two.

If you're working with an image that contains parallel lines of any kind and need to add further elements, you can't get around this problem. Until the advent of the Vanishing Point filter in Photoshop CS, this meant adding in guidelines as reference points and working out the vanishing point manually. The filter changed all this, and made the business of perspective a relative doddle.

In CS3 the filter has been revamped in two important ways. Firstly, new planes can now be extruded from existing ones at any angle. Previously, only right angles were possible. Secondly, the filter now allows for pasted images to be positioned across multiple planes simultaneously.

In this tutorial we're going to put both of these new aspects of the Vanishing Point filter to work by stretching a DVD insert onto a blank DVD case. The case has been photographed at an angle that allows the front and back to be shown, and our two-dimensional insert artwork will be dropped in and wrap around the DVD case as you watch! It won't be difficult to see the new potential of the much-improved Vanishing Point filter by the time you hit step 17.

WORKS WITH | ADOBE PHOTOSHOP CS3

THE ARTWORK

Get cracking on your Insert design

01 Insert options To create the most authentic DVD insert for a DVD case, you need to create an insert with a front and back panel, complete with spine. You can skip this process if you wish, by opening a horizontal image and copying it to the clipboard with Ctrl/Cmd+A then Ctrl/Cmd+C, before going to step 7.

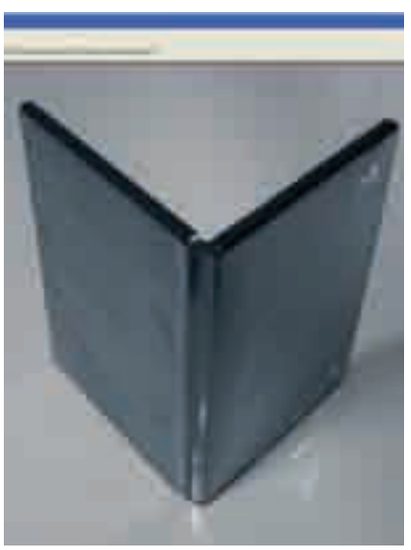
02 Create DVD template Go to File>New and change the units to mm and enter 183 for Height and 273 for Width, and set Resolution to 300 and Background Contents to white. Now press Ctrl/Cmd+R to show Rulers, and drag a guide out from the ruler on the far left to 130mm (right/Ctrl-click the ruler and change the units to mm if necessary).

03 Insert front image Drag another guide to 144mm. This marks out our spine. Open the image you want on the front and drag the relevant layer across. Use Ctrl/Cmd+T to load up a Free Transform, hold down Shift and drag the corner handles to suit, clicking/dragging from the centre to reposition if needed.

04 From artwork to vanishing point You can fill the spine with part of the front image, leave it white or fill with the background image. Open the background image, drag the relevant layer across and transform as needed, avoiding the spine or filling it as desired.

05 Add text If you want to add text to the front or back, simply click the Text Tool (T) and type, repositioning the text by dragging with the cursor outside of the text. Highlight the text in order to change font, size or colour if required. Press Enter to confirm.

06 Rotate spine text If you want your text for the spine, type as usual and then hit Ctrl/Cmd+T to access a Free Transform. Now drag from just outside any of the corner handles to rotate the text until it's perfectly vertical. Flatten the image via the Select menu when finished, then use Ctrl/Cmd+A followed by Ctrl/Cmd+C to copy to the clipboard.



07 Create a new layer Next, open the image of the DVD box and create a new layer by clicking the relevant button at the bottom of the Layers palette. You can rename the layer 'Insert'. Now go to Filter>Vanishing Point in order to fire up the Vanishing Point dialog.

Tip

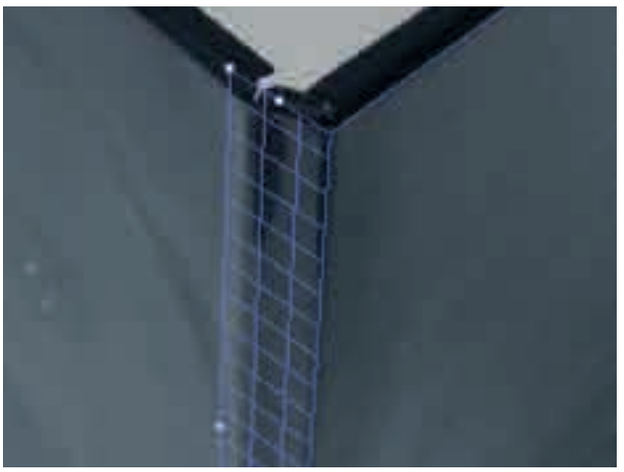
Overcoming perspective problems

There are occasions when even though you seem to have produced a viable plane, and hence the grid appears blue rather than yellow or red, you may find that the other additional planes don't line up with the perspective of the image you're working with. This is because the filter offers you a bit of leeway for less-than-exact planes, but when you're adding more than two you really need to be exact. If you're having problems, simply start from scratch and have another go.

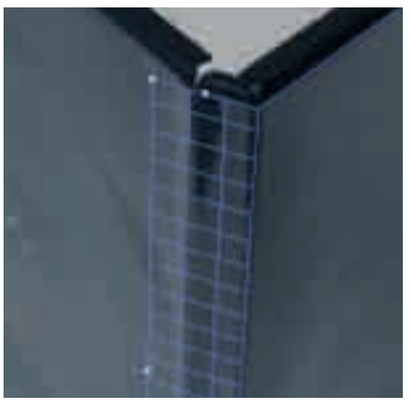
MAINLY ON THE PLANE

It's all a matter of perspective

08 **Front panel plane** Click in each of the four corners of the DVD front panel in turn to produce a rectangular shape. A blue grid should then appear to denote a perspective plane. If the grid is red or yellow, you haven't matched the corners up correctly and will need to tweak the corner handles until a blue grid appears.



09 **Spine plane** Next, hold down the Ctrl/Cmd key and drag across from the middle handle on the left-hand side of the perspective plane to create a new plane that spans the DVD spine. You should now have created a perpendicular plane.



10 **Alter spine angle** However, unless the box is shot at the exact right angle, chances are that a perpendicular plane is not what you need. This is where the CS3 improvements come in. Hold down the Alt/Option key and drag from the middle handle to swing the plane inwards or outwards.

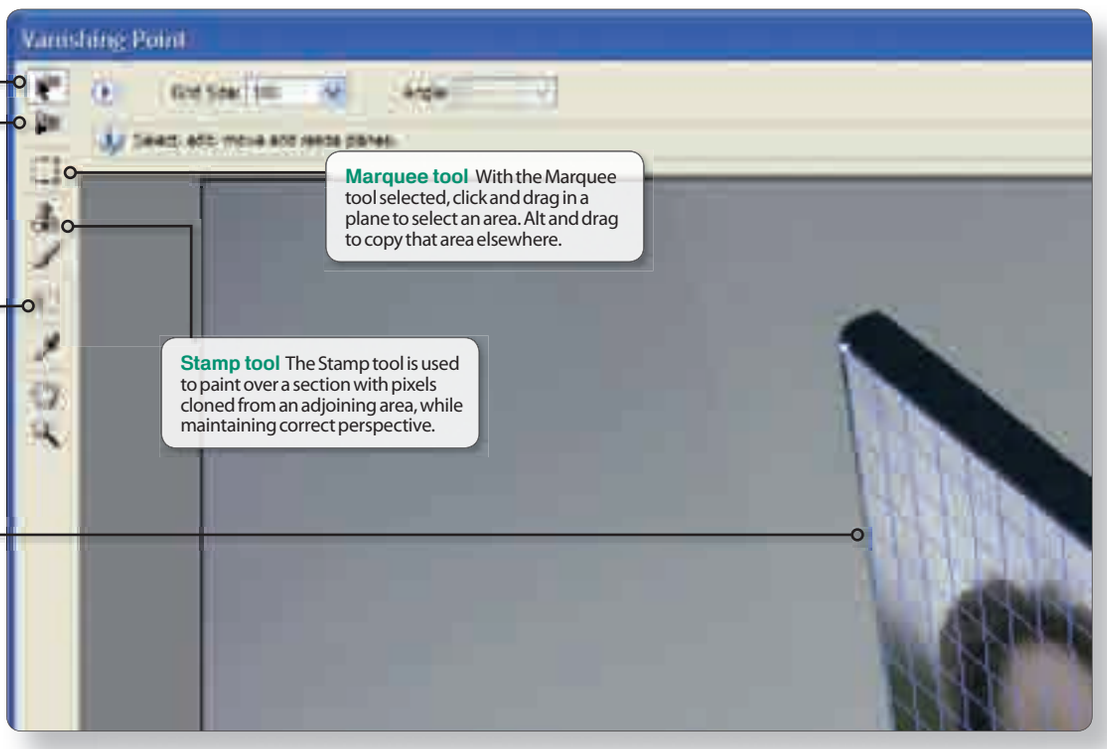
Vanishing Point tools

They can make all the difference if you know exactly what each one can do and how to use them, so here's a run-down of the Create Plane, Edit Plane, Transform, Marquee and Stamp tools

Create Plane tool The Create Plane tool is the default tool selected when you open the filter, and it allows you to define a perspective plane.

Edit Plane tool To adjust the grid defining the perspective plane, select the Edit Plane tool and drag the corner points to change the perspective.

Transform tool The Transform tool enables you to scale and rotate a selection. Hold down Shift in order to constrain the existing proportions.


Vanishing Point
Marquee tool With the Marquee tool selected, click and drag in a plane to select an area. Alt and drag to copy that area elsewhere.
Stamp tool The Stamp tool is used to paint over a section with pixels cloned from an adjoining area, while maintaining correct perspective.

FINAL STEPS

Drop in the insert and watch the magic happen

11 Flush spine edges You should now be able to match the new plane to the exact angle of the spine. Increase the height and width of the plane to match the spine edges by just dragging the top, bottom and side handles.

12 Rear panel plane Hold Ctrl/Cmd and drag another plane leftwards from the middle handle of the new plane on the spine. It'll probably be at a strange angle, but don't worry. Drag roughly to fit the rear panel of the DVD box.

13 Alter rear panel angle Now we're going to use the new CS3 feature again by holding Alt/Option and swinging the plane inwards or outwards via the middle handle to suit the back panel of the DVD cover. Again, we can use the handles on the sides and tops to adjust the height and width of the plane.

14 Paste insert We copied our image to the clipboard in step 5, so now we're ready to paste it into place. Use Ctrl/Cmd+V to paste. The image needs to be considerably smaller than the box, because once moved inside, the handles can't be accessed if outside the box border, so hit Ctrl/Cmd+T to launch a Free Transform.

15 Resize down With the Shift key held down, move one of the corner handles inwards until the insert looks like it will fit easily inside the DVD box with room to spare. Now click and drag from the centre to move the insert inside the DVD box area. The edges should now automatically contour to fit the perspective planes.

16 Resize up to fit You should be able to see all of the handles. Drag each one to stretch the insert to fit the box, leaving a small amount of space from the edge for maximum realism. You may need to move the insert and tweak the handles to ensure that the spine fits flush.

17 Reveal polythene cover Click OK in the dialog to finish. Your newly created insert will now be sitting on the Insert layer. Finish by knocking down the opacity of the Insert layer to something like 65%, to allow some of the polythene cover to show through.

Tip

Resizing means resampling

Don't forget that when using the Transform command to scale artwork to fit inside a perspective plane, you'll be resampling that imagery in the same way as you might with the Image Size dialog. Resampling down is generally unproblematic, but resample upwards too much and you risk reducing the quality of the imagery. The moral of the story is to try and use artwork at least as big as the object that you're placing it into.

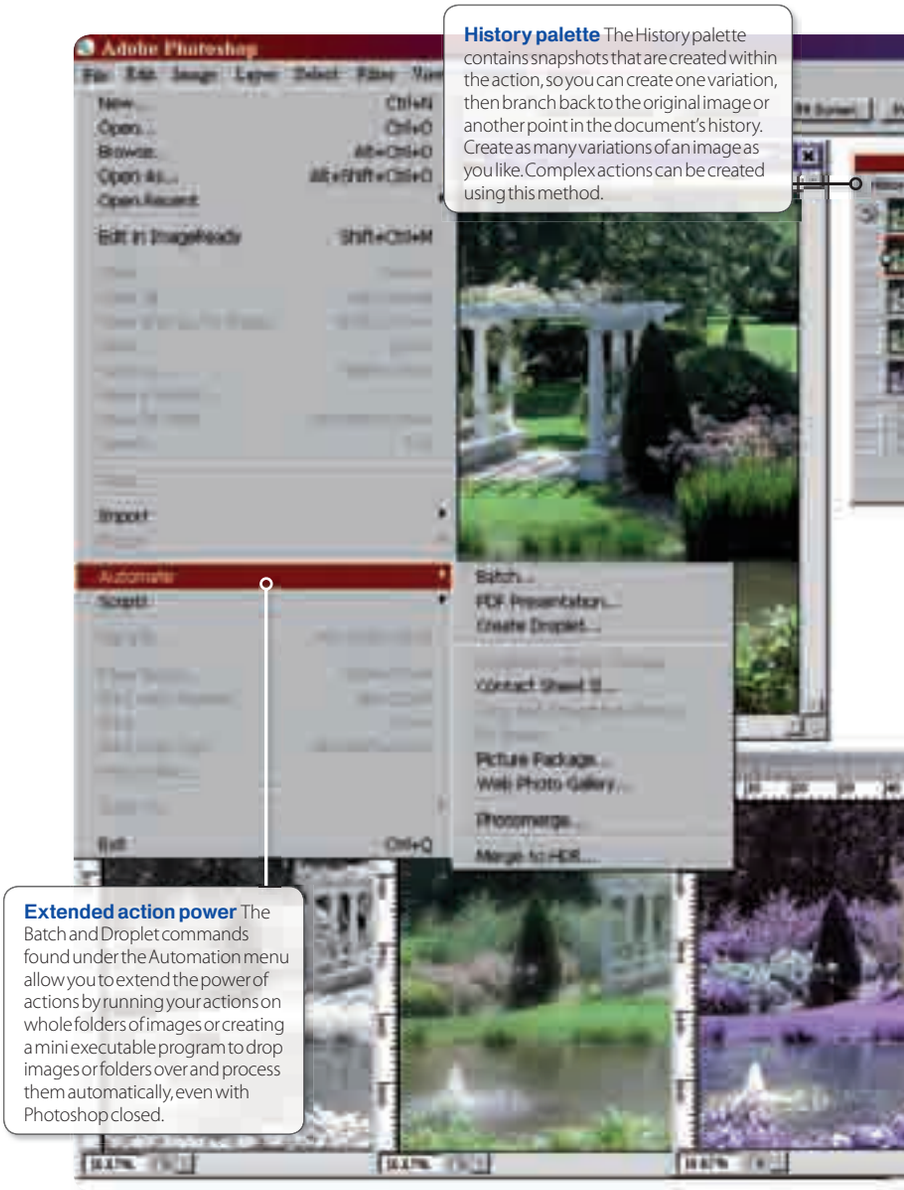
Actions

Optimise your workflow processes, save time or get creative with the powerhouse of actions

An action is a series of commands that are recorded and then run on an existing image, or they create a new document. Actions are one of the most powerful Photoshop features.

Actions can be used for common tasks such as rotating images or black and white conversion. They can also be used to create sophisticated frames, text effects, patterns and anything else you can dream up. The main things you cannot record are the painting tools. Almost everything else is fair game – even paths, and the use of patterns and shapes. Just remember to ensure that all required external files (fonts, layer styles, patterns) are also provided when sharing your actions, otherwise the action generates an error.

When building actions, try to prepare for every image possibility. Also keep in mind that if you share actions with other people, the version of Photoshop is important. Any new Photoshop features incorporated into the action won't work when the action is run in prior versions. Also name all layers, snapshots, etc, and they will work across most Photoshop languages. Finally, change your units to 'percentage' before recording transformations, because the size of your images may change. This helps avoid some action pitfalls.



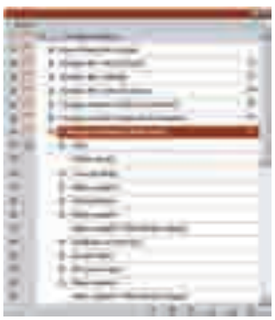
History palette The History palette contains snapshots that are created within the action, so you can create one variation, then branch back to the original image or another point in the document's history. Create as many variations of an image as you like. Complex actions can be created using this method.

Extended action power The Batch and Droplet commands found under the Automation menu allow you to extend the power of actions by running your actions on whole folders of images or creating a mini executable program to drop images or folders over and process them automatically, even with Photoshop closed.

The Actions palette

The heart of action creation

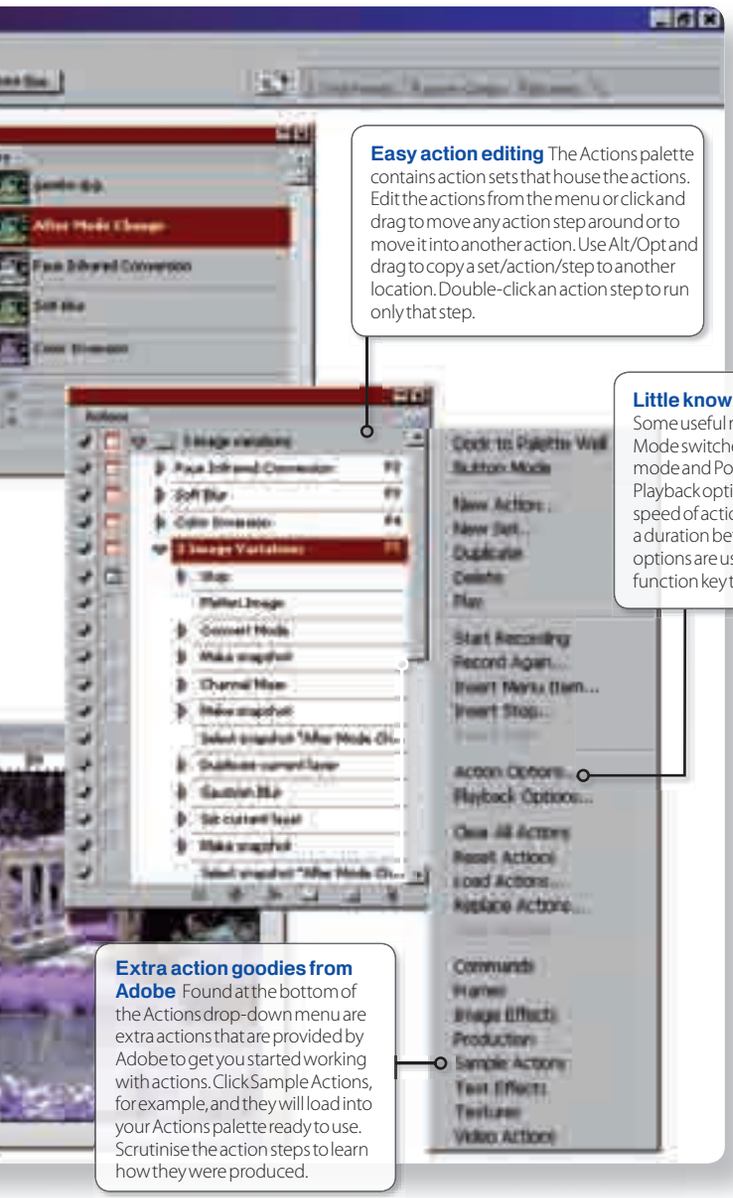
The Actions palette is where you stop, record and play actions, as well as create new sets, new actions and delete actions. And that's just the buttons at the bottom! If you look at the left side of each action command, there are two columns. To skip a step when the action plays, uncheck the checkmark in the first column. The second column contains a dialog icon. This icon is only available in steps where additional parameters are required for the step to be completed (whenever a step has an associated dialog box). Enable the icon if you want to enter new parameters in the dialog box each time the action encounters that command – for example, to change Sharpening parameters for each image processed with the action. Turn it off if you want to have the same parameters run each time the action is played.



The Batch command

Supercharge your actions

The File>Automate>Batch command is an action powerhouse. It allows you to process not one, but any number of images within folders/subfolders with a single action. Select the action, source (where the images are located) and destination (where the image output is stored). Generally, don't pick Save and Close as a destination, which overwrites the original files. Instead, create a folder on your hard drive and use this as a destination, then select a numbering system for the images. Select Extension in the last drop-down. If you have a Save command in the action, select None as the Destination.



Easy action editing The Actions palette contains action sets that house the actions. Edit the actions from the menu or click and drag to move any action step around or to move it into another action. Use Alt/Opt and drag to copy a set/action/step to another location. Double-click an action step to run only that step.

Little known menu item features Some useful menu items: Button Mode switches between Edit Action mode and Power Action User mode. Playback options allow you to set the speed of action playback and pause for a duration between steps. The action options are useful to assign a colour or function key to the selected action.

Extra action goodies from Adobe Found at the bottom of the Actions drop-down menu are extra actions that are provided by Adobe to get you started working with actions. Click Sample Actions, for example, and they will load into your Actions palette ready to use. Scrutinise the action steps to learn how they were produced.

Tip

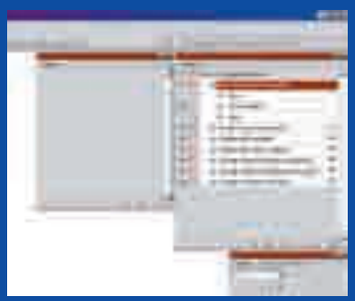
Droplet compatibility

If the droplet is created in Windows, drag and drop it over the Photoshop icon on the Mac operating system before using it. This updates it for Mac.

Droplets

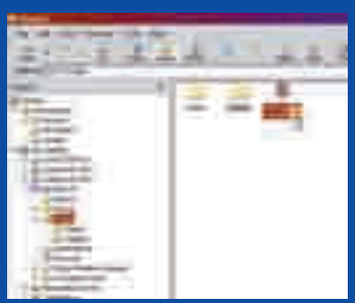
Creating mini action programs

A droplet is a small program created out of an action. It's stored as an executable program and used to process images without having to launch Photoshop.



01 Choose an action Highlight the action to turn into a droplet. Uncheck stops and dialog boxes, or the droplet will stop each time they are encountered. It's best to let the droplet handle any Saving commands for you, not the action.

02 Create the droplet Go to File>Automate>Create Droplet. The action will be entered. Hit Choose to provide a name/location on your hard drive/desktop. Pick Folder as a destination; enter the location/serial naming scheme for your photos.



03 Test and use the droplet Navigate to the droplet. Select a photo, group of photos or entire folder. Click-drag it on top of the Droplet icon. The droplet opens Photoshop and processes the images, and they're output to the folder you specified.

The Actions menu

All the commands for action production

The Actions drop-down menu is the place to be for controlling your actions. Button Mode is perhaps the most useful of functions here because it turns your actions from Action Editing mode into a one-stop button factory in Photoshop. All action editing operations are hidden, and clicking any button automatically runs the action – useful for using the actions after they are created. At the bottom of the menu are several of Photoshop's preset actions, such as commands, frames, text effects and image actions. The Insert Stop command is useful for providing instructions to the user, and Insert Menu Item is useful for inserting commands even when they are not accessible within the image you are working with (for example, if you want to insert a flatten image command but the image is already flattened – see the main tutorial).

The History palette

The little-known action branching warrior

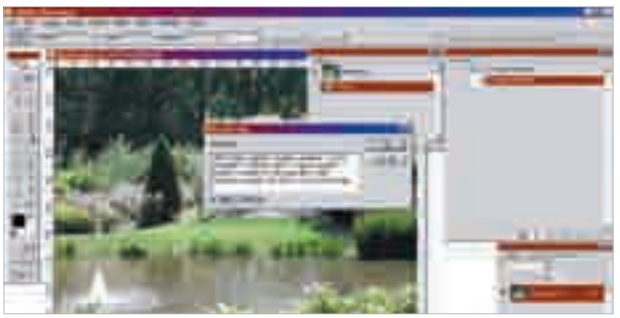
Most people wouldn't associate the History palette with actions, but as shown in the tutorial on the next two pages, it can be an invaluable tool. Create snapshots to provide an endless variety of branching points for your image ideas, and jump back and forth to and from the image's historical points of interest, all recorded within your action. In addition to the History palette, the actions in and of themselves are learning tools. By reading through the steps in an action you can learn how a developer created the action, solved a problem or used a feature in Photoshop.

GETTING IN ON THE ACTION

First steps in creating an action

01 **Create an action set to contain the action** Here you will create an action that produces three photo effect variations of an image, separates them into three documents and saves them to your hard drive. Open any image in Photoshop. Click the Create New Set icon at the bottom of the Actions palette, and give the set a name. Actions can only be created within an action set.

02 **Set up the action** Now click the Create New Action icon and give the action a name. If you wish, you can assign it a Color and Function key, both of which are used later in Button mode to add visualisation and one-click action execution. Click Record. The Record button turns red to signify the action is recording your every move from this point on.



03 **Introducing the action (optional)** If sharing the action, it is essential to provide a message at the beginning of the action explaining its function. Access the drop-down at the top right corner of the Actions palette and select Insert Stop. Now enter an Introduction Message and click the Allow Continue checkbox, enabling the user to continue through the action when encountering this message.

04 **Flatten image** Go into the Actions palette drop-down menu and this time select Insert Menu Item. A message prompts you to select an item from the menu. Go to Layers>Flatten Image, and click OK in this message prompt. This ensures that any images with layers are flattened, and ensures compatibility with a variety of possible images.

05 **Convert Mode** Select Insert Menu Item and convert to RGB (Image> Mode>RGB), so the action will work when applied to images from any mode (except Bitmap and Multichannel). You can use File>Automate> Conditional Mode Change instead, but the action will stop each time Convert Mode is called upon.

06 **Create an original image history state** Click the History drop-down palette and hit New Snapshot. Give it a name, eg 'After Convert Mode'. As history states can be recorded in the action, you can use them to quickly bring the image back to any history state.

Digital photo frames

Create professional quality layouts with frame actions

Actions can be used to create a variety of photo frames around your images, and since you can incorporate layer styles into the action, you can also include bevelling, embossing and inner drop shadows that create a realistic lighting scenario where the frame creates a shadow on the image. To create a quick frame, with the action recording, alternate between sizing the image up and filling a newly created layer with colour. When you have three layers or more created, apply some filters to each layer and a unique bevelled layer style for each (don't forget to experiment with the Bevel contours). Then apply the inner shadow to the main image layer, and you have yourself a nice and tidy little frame. There are a variety of frame actions included on the CD which you can experiment with.

Text effects

Add a touch of style to your fonts

Creating various font effects is a perfect way to learn how actions operate. When creating a specific font effect, keep in mind that you have to have the correct font loaded into Photoshop first. If the font is not loaded, an error can occur. Depending on your effect, the size of the font and placement in the document window will matter. Make sure to provide instructions to the action user on what type of font is suited to your action. The text effect you see here is included on this month's CD.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Completing the action

07 **First image variation** Create a Faux Infrared look by going into Image>Adjustments>Channel Mixer. Check Monochrome and enter Red -45 Green +200 and Blue -55. Now create a new snapshot, giving it the name of 'Faux Infrared'. This records a new history state. Our first variation is complete.

08 **Second image variation** Next, select the After Convert Mode history snapshot and you can start on the second variation. Duplicate the layer, naming it 'Soft Blur 50%' and then add a 35-pixel Gaussian blur and change the Opacity of the layer to 50%. Save a new snapshot in the History palette and call it 'Soft Blur'.

09 **Third image variation** Select the After Convert Mode history snapshot again, and perform the steps for your third variation. For this one add an Invert Adjustment layer, and change the layer's blend mode to Color. Then create a new snapshot called 'Color Inversion'.

10 **Separating the variations (optional)** Snapshots are not saved with the image, so you may want to create separate documents for each variation. Go to Image>Duplicate. DO NOT provide a name. Instead, leave the default. Then go back to the original image, click the Soft Blur snapshot, create a duplicate, go back to the original and do the same for the Faux Infrared variation.

11 **Saving** Default names are used for each copy, so subsequent images run with the action aren't overwritten during a save. Go to File>Save As and save each as a Photoshop document without changing the filenames. Note the path and folder are stored; don't change or move the folder, or the action produces an error.

12 **Final action steps** If including the Save command in the action, you can close all files and include this in the action. Note: select NO when prompted to save the original file. This cleans up the workspace. Finally, create an end Stop without Allow Continue, with a message saying who you are, where people can find you, your website or email address.

Tip

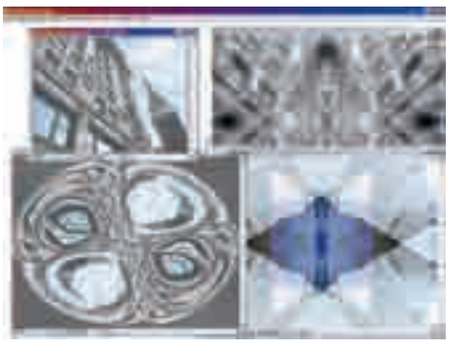
Save your action sets

If you only remember one thing, remember this: ALWAYS save your action sets to a CD/hard drive. If Photoshop crashes or the default settings are restored, your actions won't be lost.

Pattern generators

Generate an endless variety of seamless patterns

If you want to get even more creative, there are a variety of ways you can create seamless patterns in Photoshop using an endless combination of filters, offsetting and layer masking. If you record each pattern generator as an action, you'll never forget how you accomplished it. Also, these patterns can be saved and reused as patterns in Photoshop, for text masking or in layer styles. To get you started, there are several pattern generator actions on the CD. Look inside the action steps, and you'll unlock the secrets of how each pattern was created.



Layout templates

Templates for CDs, DVDs, web and print

You can create a site navigation template or even a complete website template in Photoshop. It may take some time, but once you get used to creating actions, it's not difficult to add custom shapes, lines, grids, tables and anything else you need to complete the template. Layouts actions can also create CD or DVD jewel case insert templates for your printer, publishing templates for newsletters, or scrapbook page layouts for photos. And if you like a specific template action you've made, you can duplicate it by holding Alt/Opt and dragging to a new location in the set. Then tweak the action steps to create a variation on your existing template.

Create a Sixties psychedelic poster

We're spreading the love, man and sharing our creative tips. Far out!

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

2.5 hours

YOUR EXPERT

Adam Smith

ON THE CD

Sun Rays.tiff
Vector 1.tiff
Stock photograph

KEY SKILLS COVERED

What you'll learn

- FILTER EFFECTS
- VARIATIONS APPLICATION
- MERGING LAYERS
- APPLYING LAYER STYLE EFFECTS
- EFFECTIVE PEN TOOL TREATMENT

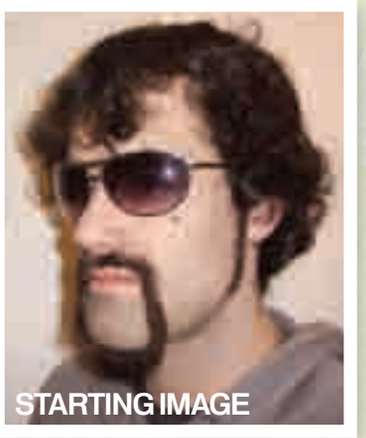
Take a trip down memory lane, when everything was groovy, a time when nothing was ever boring, where Martin Luther King had a dream, and a barrage of psychedelic music matched only by delirious artwork inspired a generation.

Well, we at *Photoshop Creative* had a dream: to create our own piece of Sixties art.

Photoshop lends itself to such styles, offering a plethora of graphic design tools. Many of these can be accessed within the Filter options – for instance the Cutout Filter achieves an abstract-shaped quality constructed from roughly cut-out pieces of colour value. This can be complemented by using any one of the Color Adjustments options associated with our favourite app.

The Color Replacement tool, for example, can be invaluable because it takes a tonal value and replaces it with any other at your disposal. These can be coupled to create the ideal vibrant design.

All these processes and others will be covered within this tutorial, so all you have to do is bag some free time, go ape and create some primo design!

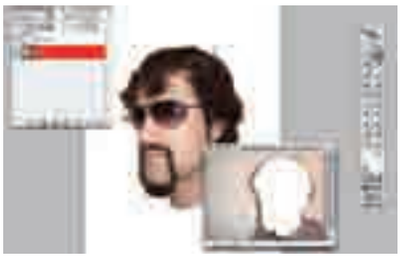


STARTING IMAGE

LET'S GROOVE

Create the basics and start on the detail

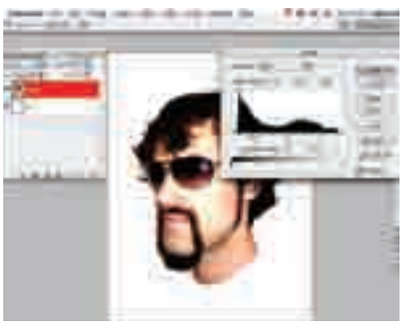
01 **First steps** Go to File>New and create a new document, 16cm Width by 21cm Height, 300dpi. Now open the Model File, selecting File>Open. Choose the Pen tool from the toolbar and draw around the head of our model. Ctrl-click the newly drawn layer, when the Move tool is selected, to access the Options bar and Rasterize this layer.



02 **Shaping your muse** Your shape will now be editable, so select the Magic Wand tool and click on the Shape layer. Choose Select>Similar from the Options bar. This picks up all comparable tones, making sure you've accessed the whole shape. While active, select the Model layer beneath and Copy>Paste into your new document.

03 **Model behaviour** Now you should have cut out and pasted in the features of your model. Define this layer clearly as 'Model'. This will be the blueprint for your developing design. Select the Move tool once more, making sure the Show Transform Controls option is highlighted, and resize your new layer.

04 **Align to centre** Quickly centralise the Model layer in case you need to add symmetry later, by dragging the Marquee tool over the canvas. Reselect the Move tool and access the Align Vertical/Horizontal Centers options now available at the head of the toolbar. Voila! A perfectly centred model.



05 **Level up** We now have the basics for our design. From here we need to create a graphic quality essential to the style of the image. Start by employing Levels treatment. Select Image>Adjustments>Levels. Move the Light and Shadow cursors closer to the centre as shown in the example and click OK.

06 **Filter fun** The overexposure creates strong contrast between the light and shadow areas of your model. This in turn exaggerates your light and dark tones. The distinction in tone makes it easier for a Cutout filter to apply graphic quality. Select Filter>Artistic>Cutout, applying the example values. The applied contrast complements the tool's abstract attribute.

07 **Back to basics** You'll now have a model that looks something like this. As you can see, the complementing Level changes coupled with the Cutout tools effect has created a strong graphic value. This simplifying of shape and form is essential to the following processes. If you aren't happy with your graphic value at this stage, play with the Cutout values until you are.

08 **Cool shades** The Pen tool is revisited at this point. We'll be using it to redraw and isolate visual details of the model. The graphic quality has offered us a stylised template to trace. Start by using the tool to draw around our model's glasses, using the same colour values. Once rasterized, use the Lasso to select any areas that need deleting and cut them out.

09 **Adding detail** With the general shape of our glasses drawn, it's time to apply some detail. Again, adhere to the tonal values present. You can do this by using the Eyedropper to select your colours. Then use the Pen tool to draw detailed elements that depict reflections in the glasses lens. This may take time but it's enjoyable to see the image assemble.

Tip

Variations

This allows the adjustment of colour balance, saturation and contrast, and offers the user the ability to examine alterations made through thumbnails. At the top of the dialog box you can see the original image and the current one after treatment. Options include the ability to edit the pigment of Shadows, Midtones and Highlights.

Tip

Colour treatment

This is a Sixties image, so it's all about vibrant colour. Photoshop has a multitude of possibilities for colour treatment, and the process has never been simpler. When applying colour adjustments through options such as Levels, Curves, Hue/Saturation, Match/Replace Color, Selective Color and Variations, you can save and apply the tonal value to other images. Simply apply your changes, hit Save and title it appropriately. Once you have use of it, enter the dialog box again, click Load, locate, open and hit OK to employ your saved alterations.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS

Tip

Blending modes

Blending modes are specified in the Options bar and control how pixels in an image are affected by painting tools over an original image. There are numerous types offering varied effects, such as Luminosity which creates an inverse effect from that of your colour mode, or Overlay which either multiplies or screens your colour, dependent on the base colour. An easy way to visualise the process is:

The base colour is that of your original image

The blend colour is applied with the painting

The resulting colour is created from the blend mode

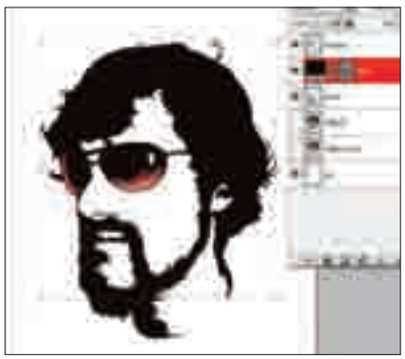
A WHITER SHADE OF PALE

Give the model a healthy complexion

10 Merge magic Once you have all your layers completely drawn using the Pen tool, you can merge them. To do so quickly and efficiently, Shift-click all layers concerning your Glasses elements and then Ctrl-click, selecting Merge Layers from the Options bar.

11 Seeing double Time to add more simple graphic quality, and this time we'll employ a new selection to do so – but start by duplicating the Model layer. There's a quick and easy way to do this: Ctrl-click on the Model layer and select Duplicate Layer.

12 Threshold Now pick one of the Model layers – doesn't matter which – and select Image>Adjustments>Threshold. You'll be presented with the Threshold Levels Bar. Set this to the example shown or whatever value you're happy with, and hit OK. Our Model layer will transform into a two-tone graphic image.



13 Get tracing The abstraction of our model's form allows a stylized base from which to draw graphic interpretation. Apply the Pen tool with a solid black tone, to draw around the black details – hair and beard – and then rasterize, naming the layers accordingly.

14 Blackout We now have all the detail we need (beard, hair and glasses), so it's time for a facial. We'll recycle the Threshold-treated Model layer via Image>Adjustments and access the Hue/Saturation option. Now decrease the Lightness to a value of -100. This will transform the tone of your image to solid black.

15 Shades of pale Click OK, reselect the Image>Adjustment options and hit Brightness/Contrast. In the Options bar increase Brightness to around 75, leaving Contrast at zero. You'll notice the image has taken on a solid grey tone, with the drawn graphics creating the details of feature. Not attractive, so let's add colour.

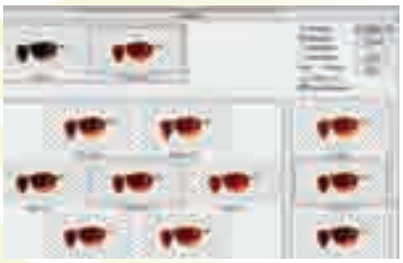
16 Colour in Simply choose Image> Adjustments, and at the foot of the Options bar you will notice the choice 'Variations'. Upon selection, you'll be able to edit an array of tonal values. Select Midtones and apply colour by clicking on the available tone selections. Once you're happy with your base colour (in our case vibrant yellow), click OK.

17 Tidy up At this point, if you look closely you may notice there are colour values straying from the borders of your image. This can be a visual disruption but is easily erased. We've used the Lasso tool so we can visually see how far back we have cropped out the interference. Once selected, simply Ctrl+X to delete.

18 Decorate Now let's start to decorate. Hit File>Open to access the Sixties-style circle motif. Pick the Marquee tool, dragging it to cover the canvas, and copy/paste the shape into your composition. Copy as many times as needed to create the pattern, and resize, coupling the Move tool and Show Transform Controls option.

HIPPY HIPPY SHAKE

The shades have got to be just right for that hippie look…



19 Once again Repeat the process in step 10 to merge the Hair and Beard layers, then again select Image>Adjustments> Variations and add the desired tonal value to your Glasses layer. We added values that increase red and yellow tones for an orange hue.

20 Keep track To keep colour consistent you need to add the same tonal value to all details. Note the values added to the Glasses layer in Variations, and apply them to other layers.

21 Coordinating With the layers now all according to their own colour schemes, it's essential to add a corresponding tonal value for the backdrop. We applied an orange wash to the background using the Paintbucket tool.

22 Layer Style Choose File>Open and access 'sunrays.tiff'. Copy/paste it into your document. Using the Eyedropper tool, set your foreground/background colours on the toolbar to the orange and yellow in the image. Select Add Layer Style>Gradient Overlay from the foot of the Layers bar. In the dialog box click on the Gradient bar, select Foreground/Background preset and click OK.

23 Funky effect Duplicate and edit any further circle motifs and resize as you wish, using the scaling functions previously mentioned. Click on the Ray layer and choose Filter>Distort>Twirl. Use this effect subtly and it will edit your rays layer, creating a psychedelic fluid shape. Reposition your model accordingly with the Ray layer's new appearance.

24 Outline Again using the function previously mentioned, merge all layers excluding the Background and Ray layers. Now select Edit>Stroke. Within the Stroke dialog box set the Stroke Size to 5px, with Location set to Center. Choose a colour – something vibrant enough to distinguish the edges of your shape from the surrounding colour scheme.

25 Groovy fonts Finally, apply Sixties-style lettering. We've selected the Action Is font, corresponding to the colour scheme. Select the Create Warp tool in the Options bar, when the text layer is active, treating it to some funky distortion. Now rasterize and cut and paste it to your heart's content. Once satisfied, align your text and treat it with a Stroke effect, this time with an Outside Location.

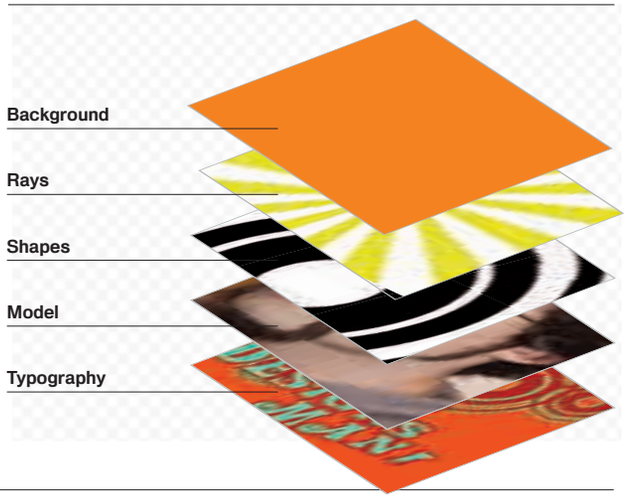
Tip

Gradients

Gradient effects can add substance to the generation of colour in an image. In step 22 we have shown a more efficient way of applying colour than using the Gradient Fill tool (toolbar). The reason for using the Add Layer Style option is that the applied effect will be constantly editable. Consider using this option for an array of effects and it will save you the trouble of being lumbered with unwanted outcomes.

Layer structure

Behind the bearded wonder



Cosmetic surgery the Photoshop way

Reshape noses, suck out double chins, stick in cheek implants and create super size lips with cosmetic surgery the Photoshop way…

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS, CS2, CS3

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

One hour

YOUR EXPERT

Matt Henry

If you think removing freckles and spots is a good way to pass the time, wait till you start giving your friends and family liposuction, nose jobs, lip enhancement and cheekbone implants – the hours will just fly by.

Playing plastic surgeon is indeed an addictive pursuit, but before you get too carried away, remember the need to keep it real. 'Real' at least in the sense that it's believable. If your subject is happy shedding three to four stone and you can make it look totally realistic, then there's nothing to stop you performing miracles. However, it's important to be aware of the sensitivities of your subject. A friend that you might think is in dire need of a nose job may not agree, and you could well find yourself off their Christmas card list for performing surgery without consent!

The good news is there's no rocket science involved here. All that's needed is a bit of Transform and Liquify to sort out noses, lips and take a bit of weight off the face, and some careful Dodging and Burning and another bit of Liquify to really emphasize and accentuate those cheekbones.

Of course we've only scratched the surface of professional face retouching here. We haven't covered eye whitening, teeth whitening, roots colouring, skin tanning, eyebrow thinning, eye widening, evening out of skin tone and the rest – but noses, lips, cheekbones and facial slimming are great places to start. Indeed, they're probably the most noticeable aspects of all in terms of facial retouching. You can really transform the shape of someone's face, as the before and after images here will testify. Have fun and look out for future tutorials covering those other important aspects.

NOSE JOB

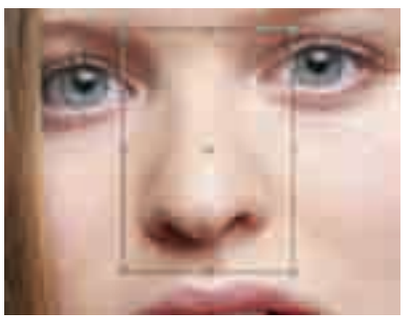
With a little careful tweaking you can create the perfect nose

KEY SKILLS COVERED

What you'll learn

- LASSO SELECTION
- FREE TRANSFORM
- LIQUIFY FILTER
- CURVES
- DODGE AND BURN
- HEALING BRUSH

01 Select the nose We'll start with the nose. Reducing the overall size of a nose isn't too difficult. Make a rough selection with the Polygonal Lasso tool, keeping some skin texture around the nose. Float this to a new layer with Ctrl/Cmd+J and then use Ctrl/Cmd+T to initiate Free Transform.



02 Alter the dimensions Reduce either the height or width percentages (or both) in the Tool Options bar. If you've altered the height, the nose may appear too high on the face. Drop Opacity to 30% and press V to initiate the Move tool using up and down cursor keys to align the bottom with the original nose.

03 Liquify for shape If you're still not happy with the result and want to make more localised changes, you can use the Liquify filter to alter shape, using a suitably sized brush to pull and push certain areas. This is good for thinning a slightly bulbous nose, or straightening a bent one.

04 Blend the new nose Set Opacity back to 100%. Add a layer mask, take a soft-edged black brush and slowly brush away at the edges of the nose in order to blend the original surrounding skin texture with the new altered texture. Be careful not to erase any of the new nose.

05 Liquify cheekbones Now select the background layer and duplicate it with Ctrl/Cmd+J. Next, go to Filter>Liquify and set the brush to a large size in relation to the cheekbone area. Place the cursor at the point where the cheekbone is most prominent, and drag upwards and outwards slightly. Do the same for the other.

06 Add two Curves layers Now add a Curves adjustment layer and increase the lightness by dragging the curve upwards slightly with a single point. Then select the layer mask and use Ctrl/Cmd+I to invert it to black. Set the blending mode to Luminosity. Do the same again, this time with a darkening Curves layer.

Expert Tip

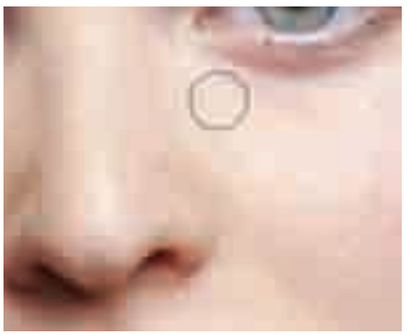
Cheekbone technique

You'll notice this technique is essentially Dodge and Burn. We're making some areas darker and some lighter. In principle you can use the same technique for males and females, though you have to go a little less hard with males. Women tend to use make-up to accentuate cheekbones anyway, so we're accustomed to seeing darker areas here. Overdo it on a man, and it'll look like he's wearing make-up!

CHEEKS AND LIPS

Making the most of them

07 Lightening for cheekbones Select the original Curves layer and take a white, soft-edged brush at around 10% Opacity. Now imagine a heart shape that sits below the eye – the selection here gives you an idea. This is roughly the area you need to lighten. Select the layer mask and slowly build up with your brush, being careful not to do overdo things.

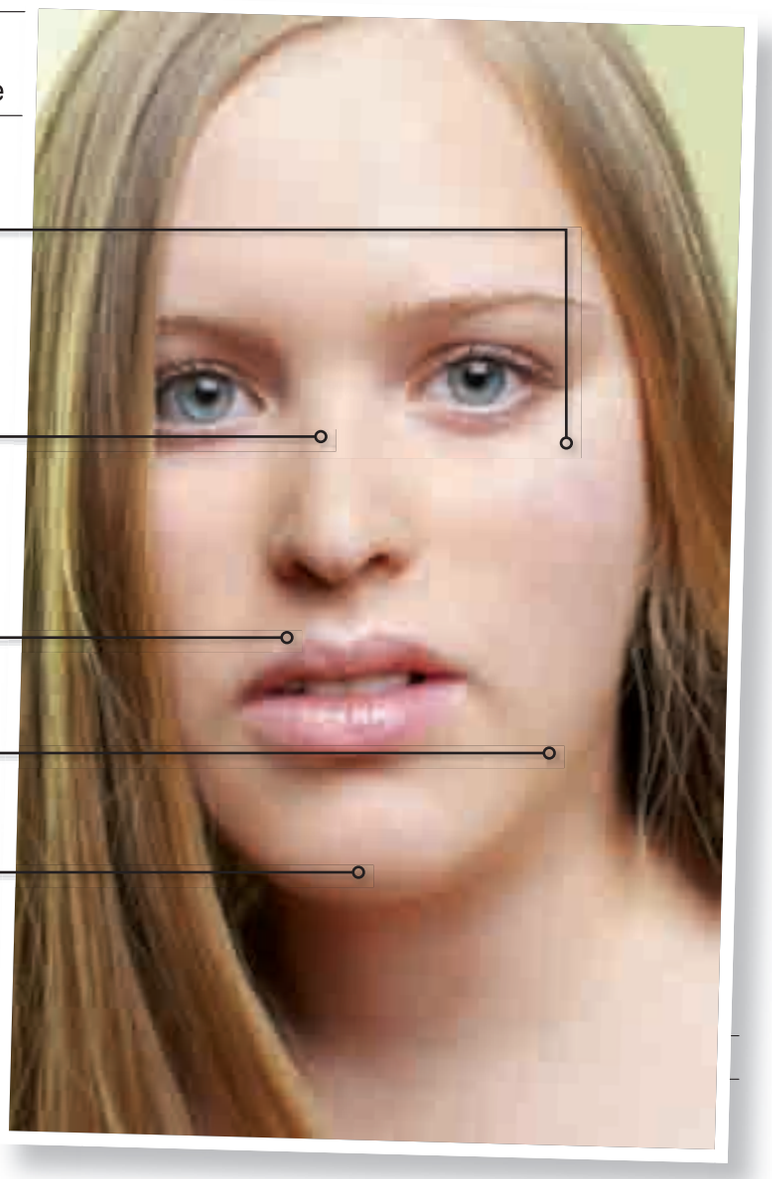


08 Finish the cheekbones Next, switch to the darkening layer, and with the same white 10% brush, start to darken the darker area to the right of the heart area (left for the left cheekbone) with the layer mask selected. Now repeat for the other cheekbone.

09 Lip selection Zoom in with Ctrl/Cmd and +, and select the Polygonal Lasso tool. Select the background layer and draw a line between the lips and then encircle the top lip, making sure to include a good amount of skin texture in the upper lip.

BEAUTY SECRETS

We share our tricks of the trade



Cheekbones The cheekbones have been lifted slightly and made to look more prominent. We've also added subtle shadows and highlights to create a more sculpted appearance.

Nose The nose has been carefully thinned out in order to produce a less bulbous look in the centre.

Lips The upper lip has been stretched upwards slightly in order to produce the characteristic 'Cupid's bow' shape.

Head and face The head as a whole has been slimmed down a little, and the face edges have been brought in.

Chin, neck and shoulders The chin has been tucked upwards and the neck and shoulders slimmed down.

Expert Tip

Female lips

The Cupid's bow lip look is sported by those with genetic good fortune such as Kate Moss, Monica Belluci and Rachel Weiz. It's characterised by a strong double arch in the upper lip that extends quite far upwards towards the nose. The technique shown here will get close, but you might want to shape the central part of the upper lip a little more with Liquify. You may also find it beneficial to increase the width of the lips as well as the height.

SLIM WITH LIQUIFY

Once the lips are done, we can slim the face

10 Feather the selection Next, press Q to enter Quick Mask mode and apply a Gaussian blur on the mask with Filter> Blur>Gaussian Blur. Don't go too hard on the blur this time around – just enough for a slight feathering so edges don't look too sharp.

11 Transform the upper lip Press Q to get out of Quick Mask mode and use Ctrl/Cmd+J to float the selection layer. Hit Ctrl/Cmd+T to start a Free Transform, and drag the handle upwards to increase the size of the upper lip. You may need to pull downwards as well to close any potential gaps.

12 Blend the lip Complete your transform and add a layer mask to the new layer with the appropriate Layers palette icon. Take a soft-edged black brush, and brush away at any obvious joins that might be found in the skin section and the lip itself.

13 Face slimming Now we're going to slim the whole face a little. Add a new layer at the top of the stack, then hold down Alt/Option and select Merge Visible from the layer context menu. A new layer will appear that combines everything from below. Next, use Ctrl/Cmd+A to select all and then Ctrl/Cmd+T for Free Transform.

14 Width reduction Next, in the Tool Options bar change the W (Width) setting to a reduced figure such as 97 per cent. Experiment to see what looks best. Press Enter to complete the transform, and then crop the image to the new edges with the Crop tool. Now go to Filter>Liquify. Set the brush to the maximum 600 size.

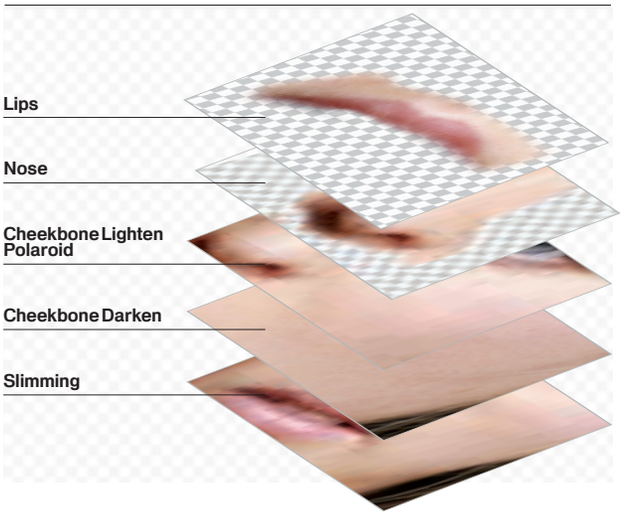
15 Shape with Liquify Now gradually start pulling inwards from the edges of the face. Start with the outside of the cheekbone area and gradually move downwards, all the time ensuring that you pull in a uniform amount at each point, unless you wish to make shape alterations, such as a round face more square.

16 Neck and chin Work your way down to the chin area and slim the neck by pulling inwards and downwards. You can drop shoulders a little as well, to suit. Use a smaller brush to push a double chin upwards slightly, then a big brush further into the face to pull the whole chin back down. Repeat as necessary.

17 Healing for blemishes You can accentuate the jawline slightly by selecting a point a little inside and pulling down and away for both sides of the jaw. OK the dialog to finish, add a new layer at the top of the stack, and use the Healing Brush set to Sample All Layers to touch up any blemishes.

The layer structure

More than skin deep



essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
30 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
George Cairns

ON THE CD
Tennis Background.jpg

Anyone for tennis?

Combine a variety of tools, commands and filters to create a realistic three-dimensional tennis ball

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

USE LAYER STYLES
CREATE 3D SHAPES
ADD MOTION BLUR,
FAKE SHADOWS & HIGHLIGHTS

In theory, the image that illustrates this tutorial could have been shot on location.

In order to create an image of a tennis ball flying over a net, you could try throwing a real ball at the camera and shooting with a high shutter speed to freeze it in mid-air. If you're lucky you might get the ball in focus, but it will be a tricky and time-consuming challenge to capture the ball in the perfect position. To add motion blur to a sharp shot of a moving tennis ball, you could combine a slow shutter speed with a burst of flash, but this technique is a very hit and miss affair.

In the following tutorial we'll show you how to keep your eye on the ball by creating it from scratch and compositing it into a scene.

By using Photoshop to create a photo-realistic tennis ball, you can quickly produce a high quality source image. You can place your computer-generated ball wherever you like in order to create a pleasing composition. By producing the ball digitally you have total control over the amount of motion blur that you add to it, enabling you to create a dynamic illustration.

In the following tutorial we'll show you how to use marquee tools, blur filters and layer styles to build up a three-dimensional picture of a tennis ball. We'll show you how to stroke a brush tip along a path in order to create a seam that stitches the ball together and use layer styles to indent the seam into the ball's surface. And with the aid of the Gradient tool, you'll be able to fake shadows and highlights that help you model a three-dimensional shape.

CREATE A SIMPLE SHAPE

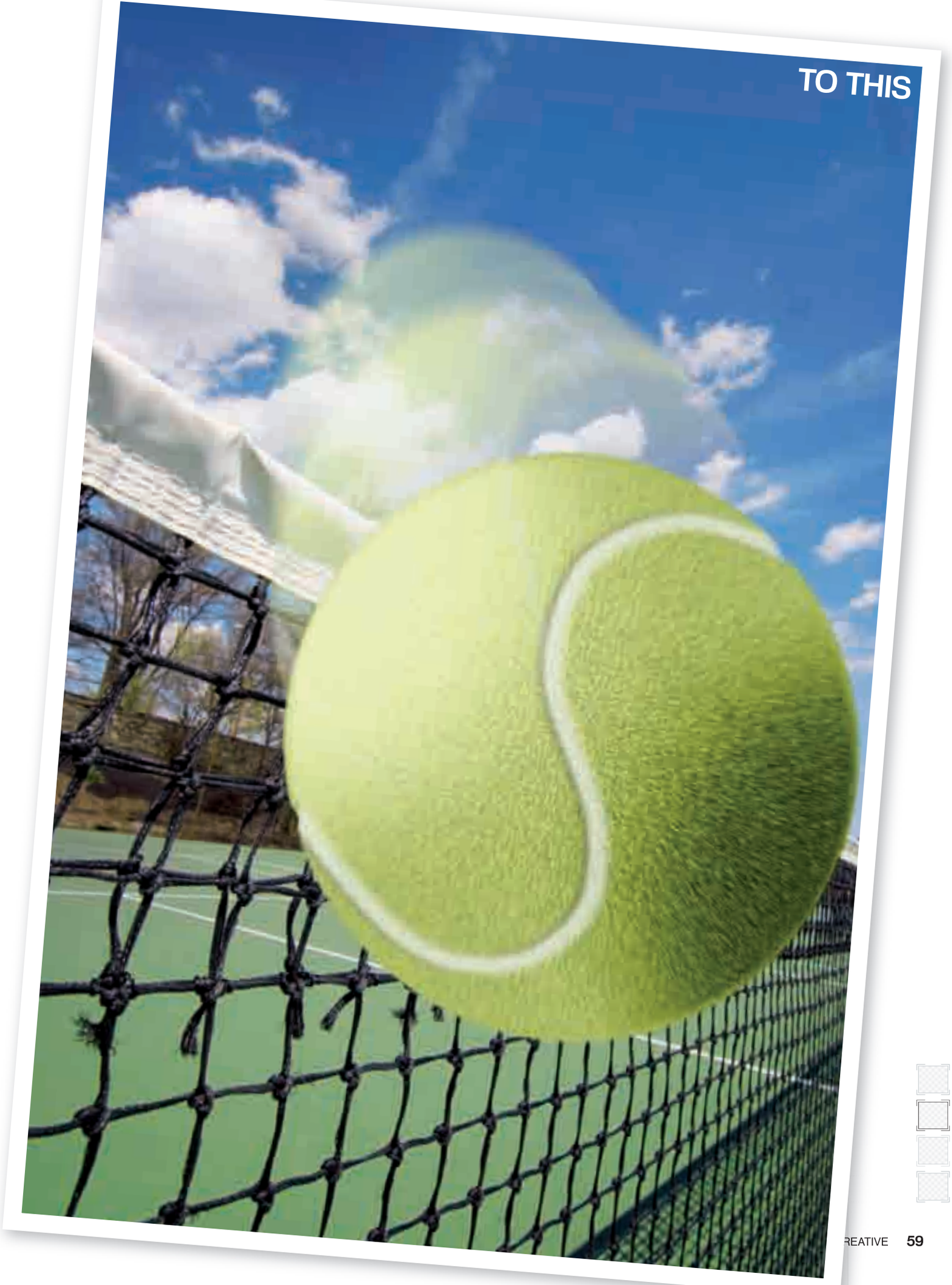
Use basic tools to generate the components for your 3D ball

01 Create a new document Go to File>New. Create a file that's 2000 pixels wide by 2000 pixels high. Give it a Resolution of 300dpi. This will give you plenty of space to create a large high quality tennis ball. You can then add your CGI ball to photos taken with high-end digital cameras and scale it down without any quality loss.

02 Draw a circle Click the Create a New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Grab the Elliptical Marquee tool (M) from the Toolbox. Hold Shift to constrain the tool and click-drag to draw a perfect circle. Click the Foreground Color icon in the Toolbox and pick a bright green. Edit>Fill the marquee selection.

03 Make some noise Press Control/Command+D to deselect the marquee. To add a realistic texture to your smooth green circle, go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Set the Amount to 50%. Set Distribution to Gaussian. Tick the Monochromatic box. Lastly, click OK. This random texture will be used to generate a three-dimensional shape.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS AND ABOVE


TO THIS

Tip

Perfect paths

In step 11 we demonstrate how to draw a curved path using the Pen tool and a handful of anchor points. The beauty of paths is the fact that you can edit them after you've placed your initial anchor points. To fine-tune a path, grab the Direct Selection tool. Click on an existing anchor point and then drag it into a new position. Drag an anchor point's Bezier curve handles to alter the lines that link the anchor points together.

BALL CONTROL

Turn 2D into 3D with help from the Gradient tool

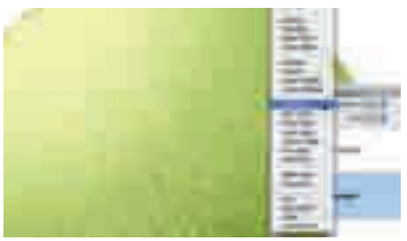
04 Create a fuzzy texture To give the 2D ball a 3D shape and more realistic texture, go to Filter>Blur>Radial Blur. Set Amount to 9, Blur Method to Zoom, and Quality to Good. Hit OK and the noise texture will blur outwards from the centre, creating a more realistic shape.

05 Spherize the circle For a greater 3D effect , right-click the ball's thumbnail in the Layers palette; hit Select Layer Transparency. The marquee selection will appear round the ball. Go to Filter>Distort>Spherize. Pick 100% – hit OK.

06 Gradients Shadows and highlights will help the 3D shape. Create a layer and label it 'Shadow'. Hit D to turn the foreground colour to black. Go to the Gradient tool>Gradient Editor>Foreground to Transparent preset. Hit OK.

07 Add a shadow Click the Radial Gradient icon in the Options bar. Move the cursor to the bottom right corner of the document and click-drag a diagonal line towards the centre of the ball. Repeat a couple of times to build up a curved shadow on the ball's surface.

08 Add highlight 3D ball shapes have a specular highlight. To fake it, create a layer called 'Highlight'. Hit X to change the foreground from black to white. Click the top left corner and drag the mouse towards the centre of the ball. Hit Ctrl/Cmd+D to deselect the marquee.



09 Beautiful blends Realistic shadows aren't grey. They consist of darker versions of the colour they're cast on. Highlights aren't pure white either. Set the Shadow and Highlight layers' blending modes to Overlay. This darkens and lightens the green ball in a more natural way and enhances its spherical look.

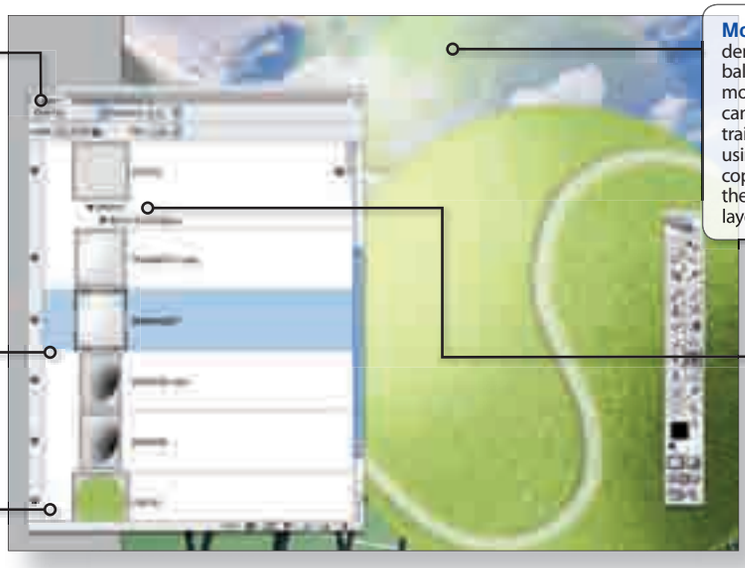
Lovely layers

Enhance your 2D ball's 3D shape by creating multiple shadow and highlight layers

Blending mode Preserve the colour on background layers by using the Overlay blending mode. This helps make you computer-generated shadows and highlights look more realistic

Multiple layers Once you've created a shadow using the Gradient tool (see step 7) you can create a darker shadow by duplicating the original shadow layer. Experiment with each layer's opacity value until you're happy with the finished shadow (or highlight) effect.

Simple shapes Our CGI ball started out life as a circle created by the Elliptical Marquee tool. A sprinkle of Noise and a touch of Radial blur helped kick the 2D ball towards the goal of creating a realistic 3D shape.



Motion trail In step 17 we demonstrate how to duplicate the ball and blur it to add a sense of movement to the still image. You can create a more effective motion trail by repeating this technique and using the Move tool to place the copied layers behind the ball. Reduce the opacity of the duplicated Blur layers to make the trail fade out.

Layer styles Layer styles such as Bevel and Emboss enable you to create three-dimensional shapes from two-dimensional brush strokes. We placed a grooved seam around our CGI tennis ball by using layer styles to add an indented bevelled edge to the brush stroke.

LAYER STYLES

Enhance your ball's 3D shape by adding a stitched seam

10 Stitch up To reinforce the ball's 3D shape let's add a stitched seam. Create a layer called 'Stitch'. Select the Brush tool, hit the Brush Preset picker and pick a soft round brush, Diameter 65 pixels. You could paint the seam directly onto the ball, but there's a neater way…

11 Draw a path Select the Pen tool and make sure the Paths icon is clicked in the Options bar. Click to place anchor points that define a path for your brush tip to follow. Click-drag as you place a new anchor point to curve the line between the two anchor points.

12 Stroke the path With the Pen tool still active, right-click (Control-click on a Mac) to activate the tool's pop-up menu. Choose the Stroke Path option. A Stroke Path dialog box will appear. Make sure the Tool option is set to Brush. Click OK and the brush tip you chose earlier will follow the path to create the ball's stitched seam.

13 Get into the groove To make the stitch look more realistic, click the Add a Layer Style icon at the bottom of the Layers palette and hit Blending Options. In the Layer Style dialog window click Bevel and Emboss. Set Style to Outer Bevel, Technique to Smooth, Depth to 101%, Direction to Down and Size to 10. Set Angle to 114° and Altitude to 37°. Now hit OK.

14 Indentation To rough up the stitch texture go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Set Amount to 10, Distribution to Gaussian and tick the Monochromatic box. Hit OK. Target the green ball layer in the Layers palette. Select the Eraser tool and erase the edge of the ball to create an indentation where the stitch wraps around it.

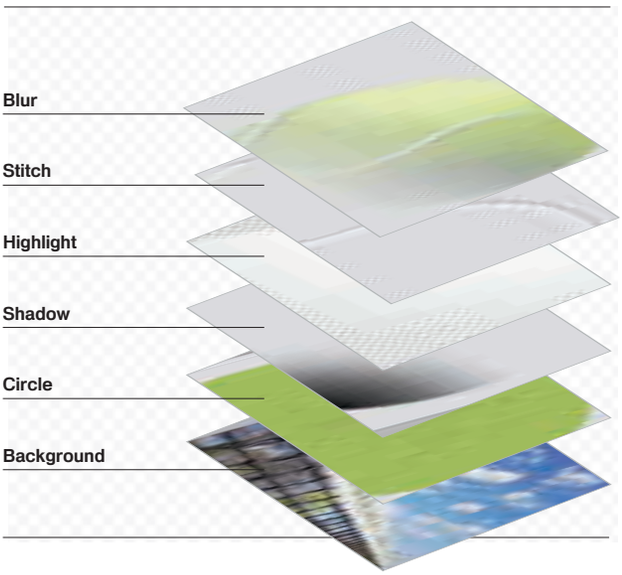
15 Group it Go to the Layers palette. Hold Shift and click all layers that make up the ball. Go to Layer>Group Layers. All the ball's layers will collapse into a single Group folder. Drag this folder onto a photo to place the ball in a location. Edit>Transform>Scale the group to make the ball fit into your photo.

16 Create motion To create a more dynamic image, add some motion blur to the ball. To do so, duplicate the group by dragging it onto the Create a New Layer icon. Right-click on the duplicated group's thumbnail and choose Merge Group from the pop-up menu. This flattens the ball's components into a single layer. Label the merged layer 'Blur'.

17 Fade the blur Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Set the Blur Angle to -56 to create a trail of blurred pixels. A Distance value of 100 pixels should do the trick. Click OK. Click the Add a Mask icon. Now grab the Gradient tool (G). Draw a black to white linear gradient on the mask to make the lower section of the blurred ball fade away.

Layer structure

How we got that illuminated look



FOCUS ON DODGE & BURN

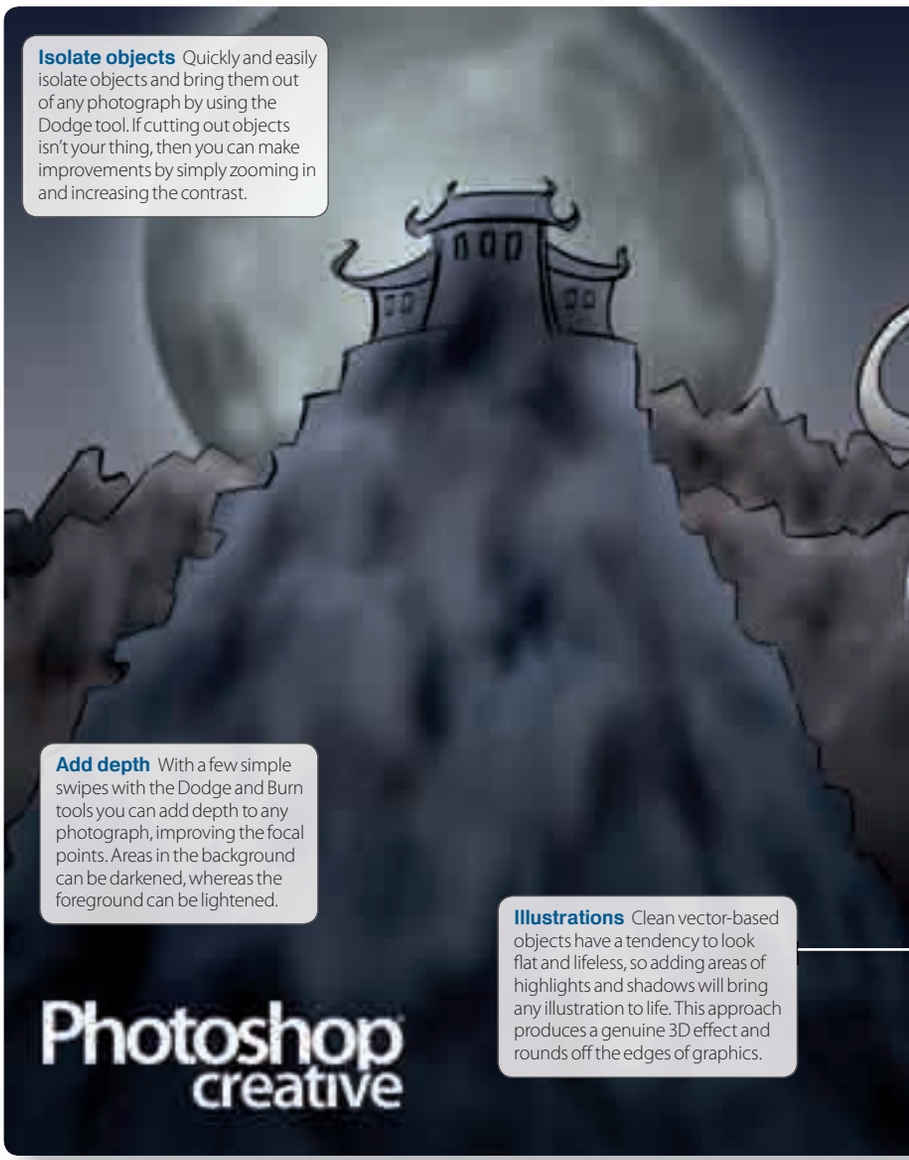
Dodge and Burn

Control the contrast of your images with these handy toning tools

Photoshop has a wealth of tools aimed at getting up close and personal with your photographs and improving problem areas, such as the Clone tool which lets you remove dust flecks or entire people, to the Dodge and Burn tools which enable you to lighten and darken specific sections.

These tools are referred to as the toning tools and incorporate the Sponge tool, which desaturates colour. The Dodge and Burn tools are used to lighten or darken areas of the image. These toning tools are based on a traditional photographer's technique for regulating exposure on specific areas of a print. Photographers hold back light to lighten an area on the print (dodging) or increase the exposure to darken areas on a print (burning).

These tools are fantastic at improving the quality of your photographs and if used correctly will bring any image to life. However, another benefit to these utilities is that they can 'dirty' an image and make it look more realistic. Take for example, an illustration created in Photoshop that incorporates areas of flat solid colour. To add depth to the graphic, the Dodge tool is used to add highlighted areas, while the Burn tool is used to add shadows and depth. This approach is great for making a flat graphic look 3D and can make the illustration jump off the page.


Isolate objects Quickly and easily isolate objects and bring them out of any photograph by using the Dodge tool. If cutting out objects isn't your thing, then you can make improvements by simply zooming in and increasing the contrast.
Add depth With a few simple swipes with the Dodge and Burn tools you can add depth to any photograph, improving the focal points. Areas in the background can be darkened, whereas the foreground can be lightened.
Illustrations Clean vector-based objects have a tendency to look flat and lifeless, so adding areas of highlights and shadows will bring any illustration to life. This approach produces a genuine 3D effect and rounds off the edges of graphics.
Photoshop creative

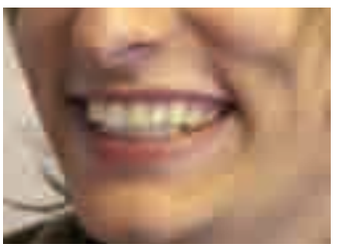
Brighten up a face

Make faces glow with ease

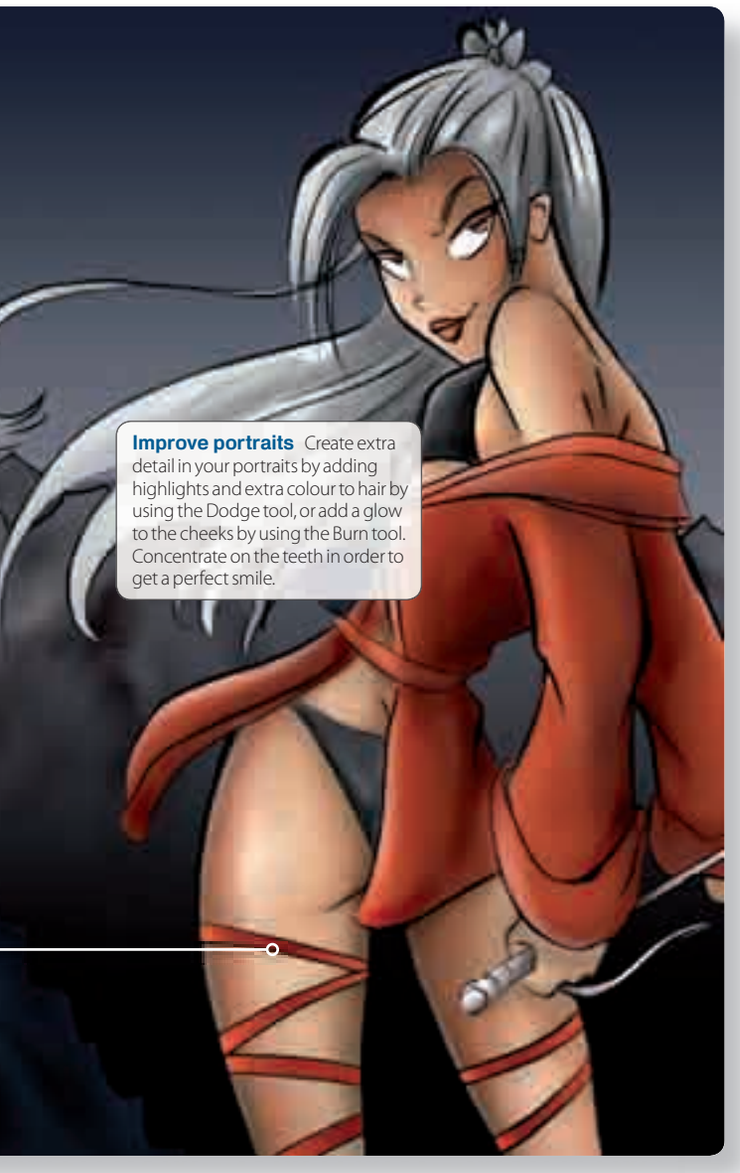
If you want to liven up any woman's or girl's face, you can use the Dodge and Burn tools to not only ensure that their eyes sparkle, but also to add more colour to their cheeks and apply extra highlights and shadows to their hair. In order to add colour to cheeks, choose the Burn tool, and with Midtones selected from the drop-down menu and an Exposure of around 10%, begin to draw colour in the required areas. Use the same settings if you wish to add depth to their hair, and then change to the Dodge tool with Highlights selected in order to add some detail.

Pearly whites

Improve the appearance of teeth



As part of the regular retouching process that you undertake with your photos, besides improving someone's complexion you can also whiten their teeth. Do this by simply using the Dodge tool and brushing over them. This approach is very quick and simple, and you don't have to isolate any areas and adjust the levels. As the teeth tonal range is toward the Highlight end of the scale, when you brush over the lip the colour won't be affected because this is more of a Midtone colour. This means you don't have to stay between the lines.



Improve portraits Create extra detail in your portraits by adding highlights and extra colour to hair by using the Dodge tool, or add a glow to the cheeks by using the Burn tool. Concentrate on the teeth in order to get a perfect smile.

Tip

Illustrations

When adding detail to an illustration using the Dodge and Burn tools, imagine where the light source is coming from, because this creates a more realistic effect. It will ensure that the highlights and shadows work in relation to each other in a real-world sense.

Tip

Exposure

The key to success with the toning tools is to select the tonal range you wish to alter in the drop-down menu and select the amount of Exposure. The higher the value the more the image will be altered, so keep trying until it's right.

Add depth to your illustrations

Graphics created in Photoshop tend to appear flat, but with some simple strokes with the Dodge and Burn tools, depth can be added providing a 3D effect

01 Rasterize the graphic

If you've created your graphic using the Pen tool, building up the vector shapes layers, you need to convert it into bitmaps while maintaining the layers ('Rasterization'). Go to Layer>Rasterize>Shape.

02 Highlights

Select the Dodge tool and a layer in the Layers palette, then pick Highlights, Midtones or Shadows, plus the Exposure, according to the colour needing the highlight. Pick a small soft brush and draw in a highlight.

03 Shadows

Select the Burn tool from the main toolbar, and as with the Dodge tool, select Highlights, Midtones or Shadows from the menu and change the amount of Exposure to affect the colour you are adding a shadow to.

Contrasting landscapes

Add depth to your photos

The toning tools are great for improving contrasts and problem areas in any composition. However, remember that although dodging and burning can be used to improve an image, this can't work miracles so your original image must be of a semi-decent quality to start with. That's what these tools are for – improving on something that's not perfect. Take your time and work on separate areas in your image, and gradually add sections to improve the overall effect.

Underexposed objects

Bring out the best in your images

Underexposed photographs are easy to correct by simply tweaking the levels or the brightness and contrast, but without isolating individual objects the entire image is altered. Using the Dodge tool will allow you to bring out an object while maintaining the contrast of the background. However, to ensure that the dodge doesn't bleed into the background, it's best to either cut out the object and paste it to a new layer, or duplicate the layer and use a layer mask in order to hide the background.

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- SETTING UP GRIDS AND GUIDES
- CREATING SEAMLESS PATTERNS
- APPLYING PATTERNS TO YOUR TEMPLATE

Design and make a gift box

Take *Blue Peter* into the 21st Century and reject pens and rulers in favour of Photoshop

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Two hours to print-ready stage

YOUR EXPERT
James Davies

ON THE CD
net.psd

The basic idea behind this tutorial is to help you create a decorative gift box template that you can print out and assemble using card, scissors and glue.

Why not use pencils, rulers and felt tips, you ask. Well, unless you're an artist of the highest calibre, chances are it will turn out like a primary school project. And let's face it, using your tablet or mouse will be more creatively satisfying in the end, in any case.

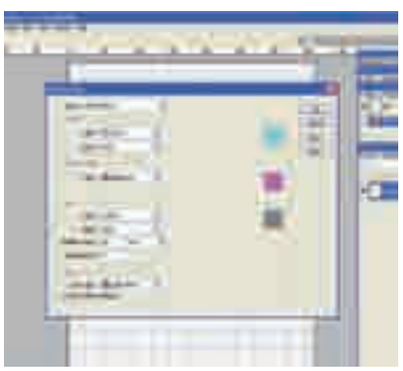
Photoshop shouldn't just be about completely replacing traditional methods to create artwork, illustrations and crafts, but about complementing these techniques by using them in combination. Many artists have already shown us how effective Photoshop is in bringing together hand-drawn elements or photos with digital input, and this step-by-step should take you nearer to these gurus.

This tutorial is about creating a more precise and professional looking 2D box template (called a 'net' technically), ready for you to print out and put together using traditional methods. Load the net from this month's cover disc or create your own – it's up to you.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

Up tools and create the blueprint for your box

01 Dimension jump Your first step is to create a new document big enough to contain your template. Based on box dimensions of 100mm x 100mm x 75mm, we need a document size of 365 x 470. This includes 25mm bleed at each side.



02 Grids... Go to Edit>Preferences> Units & Rulers and set Units to mm. Once you've done this, press Next. On the floating window choose Grid to Line every 25 with 5 subdivisions. It's worth changing the guides to a colour which will be highly visible – we've opted for red.

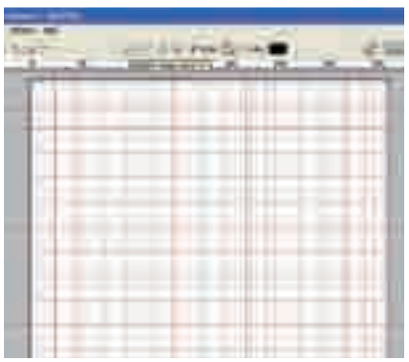
03 ...and rulers Press Ctrl+R for rulers to appear at the edges of your document, and drag in your guides to mark out your box template. Choose Snap To in the View drop-down menu and ensure Guides and Grids are selected. Now select Snap.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

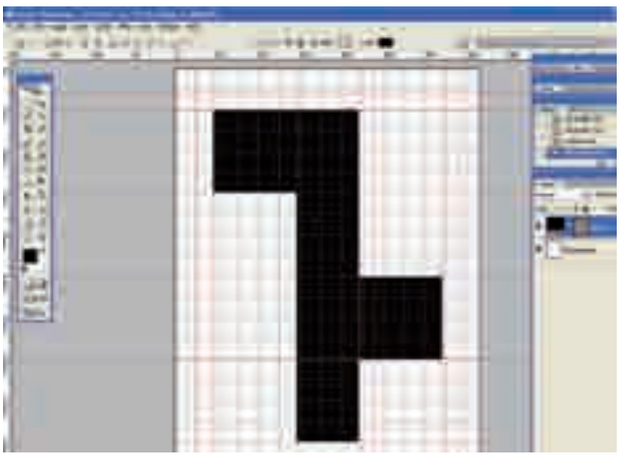
"Photoshop shouldn't just be about replacing traditional methods to create artwork, illustrations and crafts, but about complementing them"

YOU'RE DRAWING YOUR TEMPLATE, YOU CAD

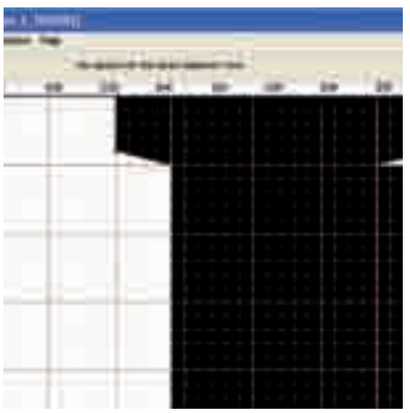
Using the Rectangle tool it's time to draw your template onto the grid



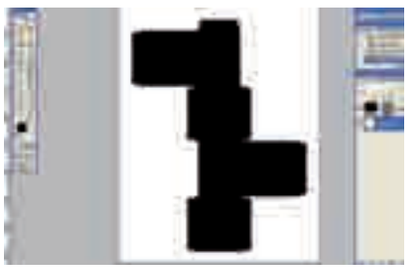
04 **Rectangle tool** Set up the Rectangle tool so it has Shape Layers on as opposed to Paths; this give a fully editable vector. You'll find these options in the top toolbar when the Rectangle tool is selected. Once you've begun creating the template, select Add to Shape Area (middle of top toolbar) and continue drawing onto the grid the box template.



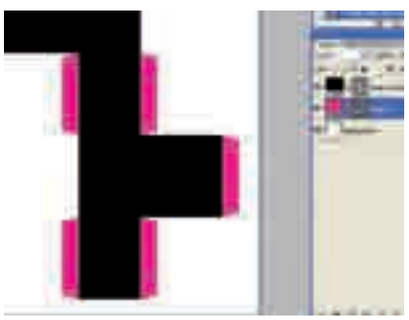
05 **Draw** While drawing you'll notice the points of your template will snap to the points on the grid for a precise template. Check yours against the one provided on the cover disc. You should begin to see the box template starting to take shape now.



06 **Tabs** Select the mask on the Layers palette and using the Direct Selection tool, select the corner point of the tab and pull it in 5mm (one grid point). Create diagonal cut-ins, which will be useful when putting your finished design together as they will ensure a cleaner fold.



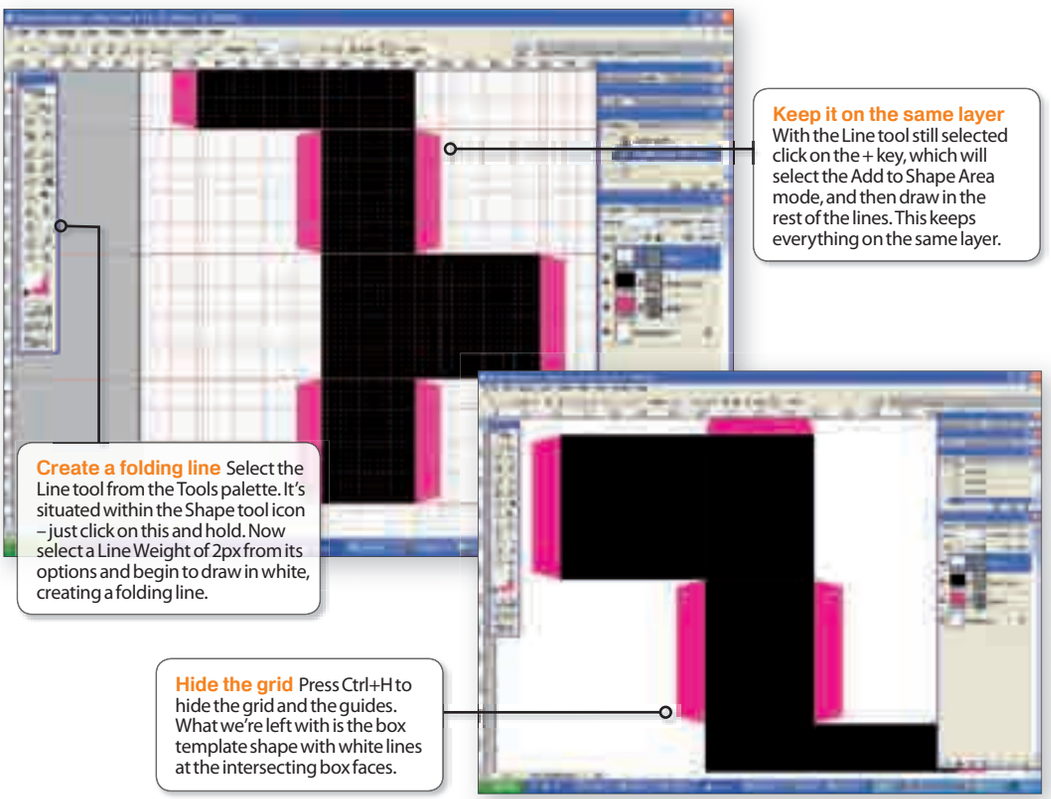
07 **Check-up** Select Ctrl+H to hide the guides and grid in order to check that you've drawn all necessary sides and tabs. Again, check this against the template provided on the disc. This shape can later be used as a mask for your pattern. For an alternative box template, see the boxout on page 67.



08 **Tabs and flaps** Duplicate the template shape layer and in one copy delete the tabs (you'll need the Mask icon not the Layer icon selected in the Layers palette). From the other template delete the box faces. Double-click the colour to alter the hue of the tabs.

Making guidelines to fold along

It's a good idea to make life easier for yourself once you come to putting the box together with your own hands. So back to the grid armed with the Line tool…



Keep it on the same layer With the Line tool still selected click on the + key, which will select the Add to Shape Area mode, and then draw in the rest of the lines. This keeps everything on the same layer.

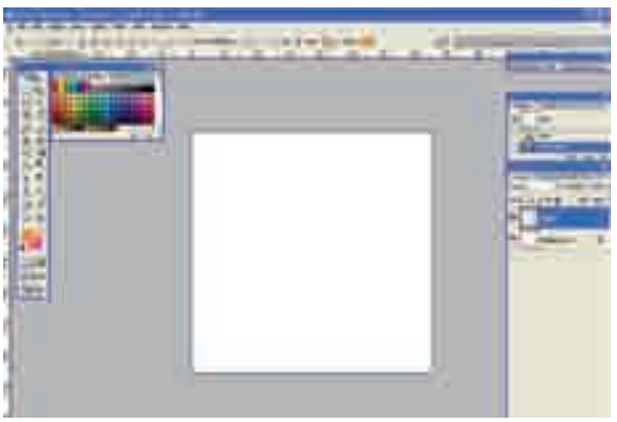
Create a folding line Select the Line tool from the Tools palette. It's situated within the Shape tool icon – just click on this and hold. Now select a Line Weight of 2px from its options and begin to draw in white, creating a folding line.

Hide the grid Press Ctrl+H to hide the grid and the guides. What we're left with is the box template shape with white lines at the intersecting box faces.

GENERAL PATTERN

Using the Pen tool, the Offset filter and a little ingenuity, we create life…

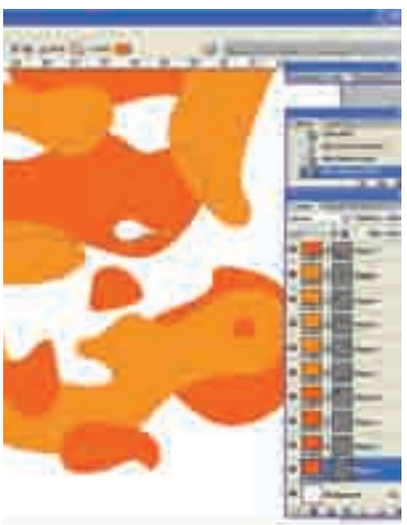
09 Blank canvas Now create a new document 450 x 450 pixels at 300dpi. If this isn't big enough for your pattern, then play around with the size of the canvas. As long as it's an exact square it should be quite easy to work with.



10 Swatch this Go to Window>Swatches to open up the Swatches palette and set it to the default. Then choose a colour scheme suited to the occasion. We've gone with a retro brown and orange. Now choose the Pen tool and set it to Shape Layers.

11 Camo chameleon Begin drawing your pattern – we've opted for a colourful faux camouflage-style pattern. You will notice that each time you draw a new shape it will create a new layer but it'll be the same colour.

12 Colour picking Double-click on the Color icon on the Layers palette and when the Color picker window opens up choose a colour from the Swatches palette, which you should still have open. This will update the colour in your Color picker window. Click OK when satisfied.



13 Colourful shapes Now draw in some more shapes, making sure both colours get a good coverage. Try cutting holes in some of your bigger shapes by selecting the appropriate layer. Do this by using the Pen tool set to Subtract From Shape Area (-) and draw smaller shapes within.

14 More colour Add a third colour to build the pattern further. Select the background layer on the Layers palette, and using the Pen tool again start drawing in more shapes. We need to draw very close to the edge of the canvas to ensure we're able to make the pattern seamless.

Tip

Keyboard shortcuts

Keyboard shortcuts are a great time-saver, especially if the option or tool you're looking for is hidden within menus and sub-menus:

Move tool – V

Direct Selection tool – A

Pen tool – P

Shape (Rectangle, Line, etc) tool – U

Direct Selection tool – A

Zoom in Canvas – Ctrl++

Zoom out Canvas – Ctrl+-

Show/Hide Invisibles (such as grid, guides, selection marquees) – Ctrl+H

Fill layer or selection – Shift+F5

Free Transform – Ctrl+T

Tip

craftand fabriclinks.com/box/box_making.html

Here you'll find a template for a two-part box (separate base and lid) in PDF format. A good starting point if you wish to create this style of box, easily imported into Photoshop to use as a guide for your own.

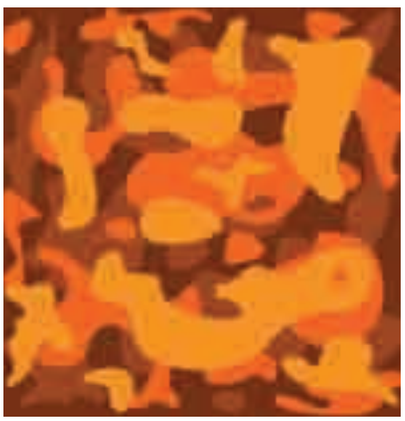
Tip

Vector-based layer masks

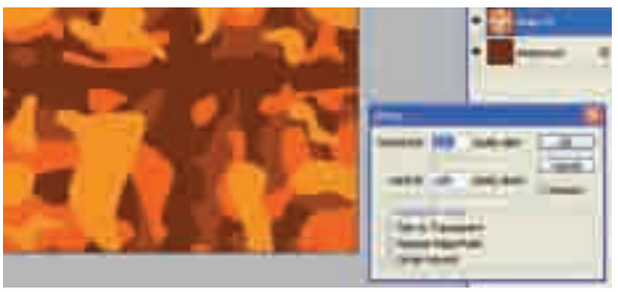
Layer masks are an effective way to show or hide portions of a layer or protect areas from editing. Once created and applied, they appear as an additional icon to the right of the Layer icon in the Layers palette. There are a few ways to create masks, but we're primarily concerned with vector masks, which during the course of the tutorial you'll have created from a selection. Just Ctrl-click the box template Path icon (it should be grey with a shape within) next to the Layer icon to create a selection. Then with the layer you want masked selected, hit Add Layer Mask at the bottom of the Layers palette. The mask is fully editable by painting directly onto it or creating selections and filling with colour.

OFFSET FILTER

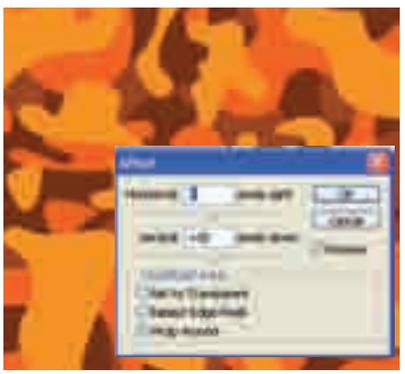
Create seamless patterns with this useful feature



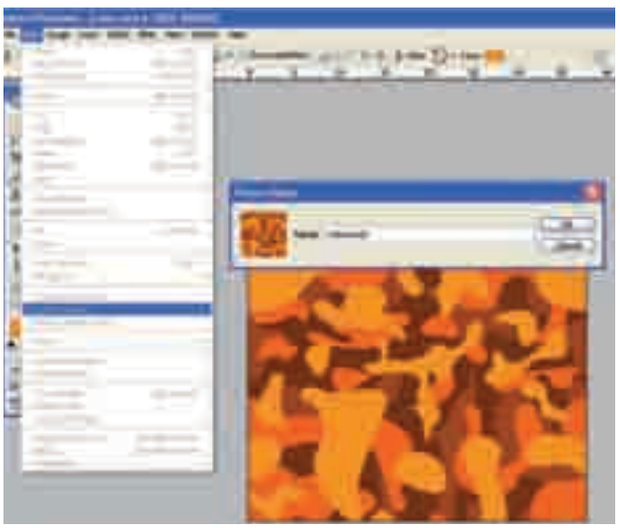
15 **Background colour** Select all the layers except for the background layer in the Layers palette. With them all highlighted, press Ctrl+E to merge them down. At this stage select a colour for the background layer and fill using the Paint Bucket tool.



16 **Offset filter** Go to the Filter drop-down menu and select Other>Offset. This tool will help your ability to create seamless patterns. Choose values for the Offset filter – these will be half the pixel width of your document, both horizontal and vertical. Make sure Wrap Around is checked and the other two options are unchecked.



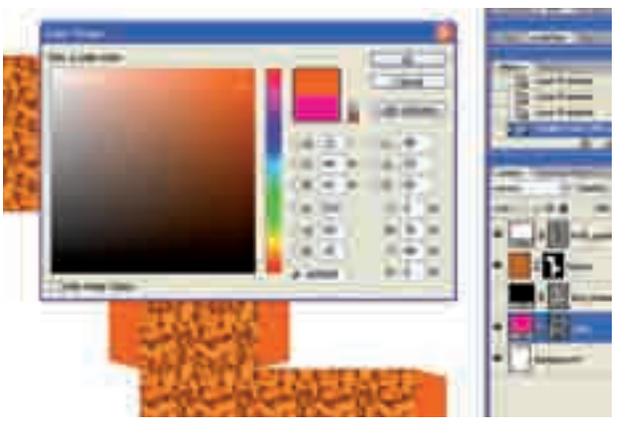
17 **Create an even spread** After completing step 16 you'll notice an alleyway traversing the centre of your canvas. Fill in this blank space with more coloured shapes. Offset these, but only on one plane at a time. This ensures a more even spread of colour.



18 **Create a pattern** Flatten the Shape layers (Ctrl+E) and output as a pattern (Edit>Define Pattern). It's also a good idea at this stage to save as a tif or jpeg in case you need to make any amendments later.

19 **Your saved pattern** Reopen the box template you created earlier and create a new layer. Go to Edit>Fill (Shift+F5) and select Pattern from the drop-down menu. In this menu you'll see your saved pattern – select this.

20 **Add Layer Mask** With your Pattern layer selected, Ctrl-click the box template (the one minus the tabs) Mask icon in the Layers palette to create a box-shaped selection. Then click Add Layer Mask, situated at the bottom of the Layers palette (grey rectangle with a white circle in the middle).



21 **Pick a colour** Double-click the Color icon of the Tabs layer – this will bring up the Color picker window. From here choose a colour from the pattern on your canvas, which will update the Color picker window, and click OK. The box is now ready for print.

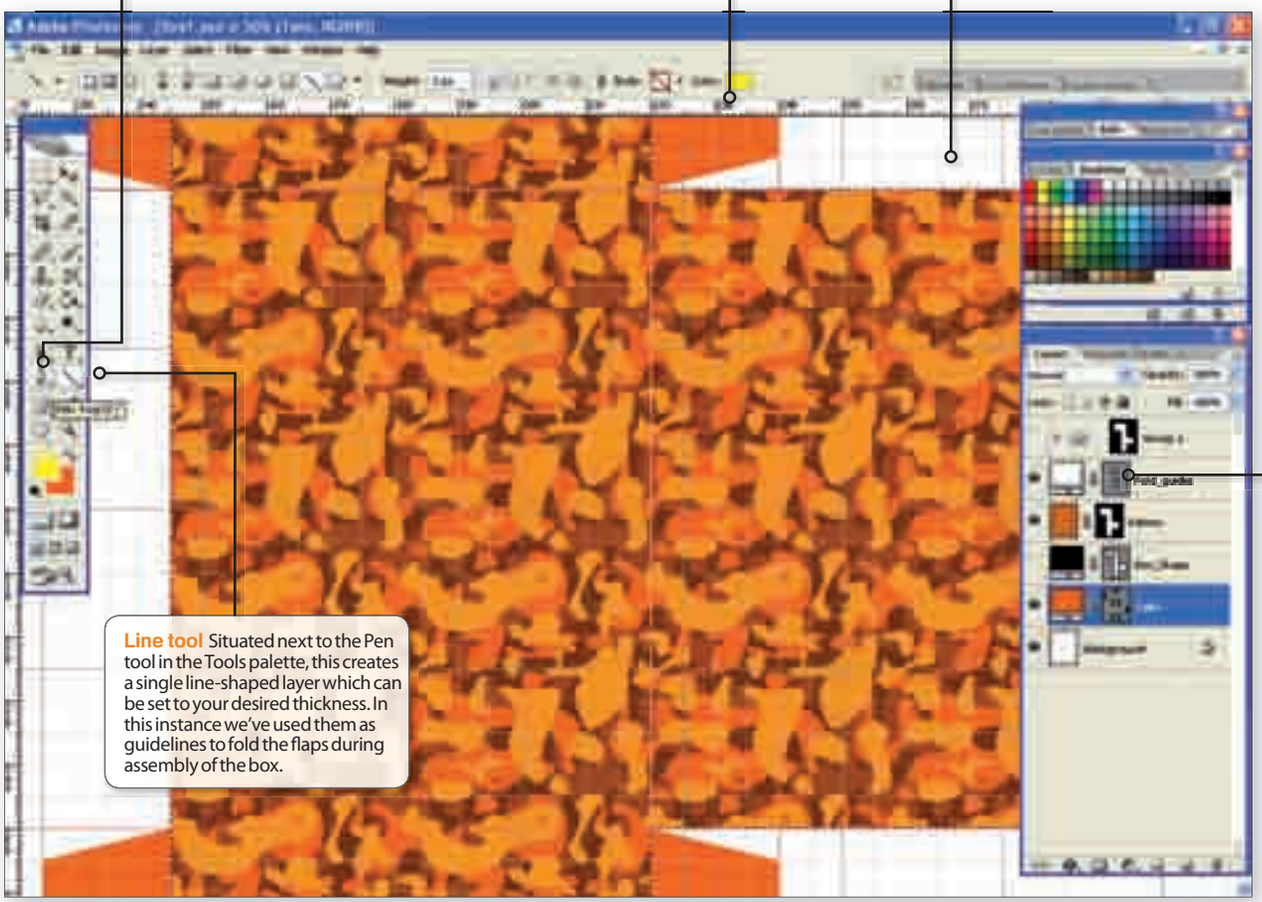
Focus on patterns – take a closer look at the tools and techniques used

We've gone over some basic tools for you to get to grips with and have applied some intermediate techniques to them. While we've shown you how to create a basic pattern, the only real limit is your imagination…

Pen tool The Pen tool is great for drawing vector shapes and building them up to create depth or patterns. Ensure it's set to Shape Layers, or you'll get lots of nice paths you don't need.

Rulers Turning Rulers on (Ctrl+R) means it's super easy to create guides. You just move the cursor to the desired horizontal or vertical and drag a guide from it. With Snapping turned on it will snap to your grid as well.

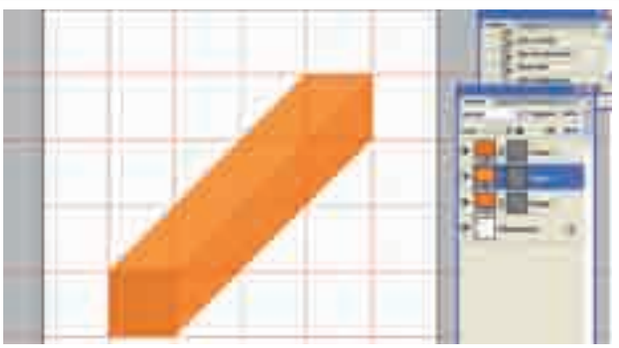
Grid This is invaluable for a tutorial like this, particularly when you switch Snapping on (View>Snap) for Grids and Guides (View>Snap To). It creates a precise working environment, taking the guesswork out of measurements.



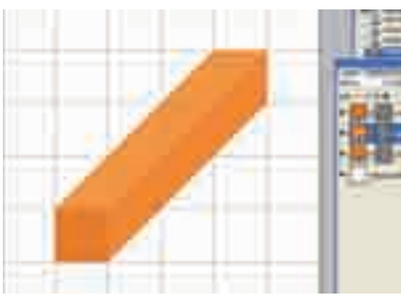
Line tool Situated next to the Pen tool in the Tools palette, this creates a single line-shaped layer which can be set to your desired thickness. In this instance we've used them as guidelines to fold the flaps during assembly of the box.

Layer masks Layer masks are a non-destructive way of keeping your layers visible in specific boundaries. In this case we've applied a layer mask to apply the pattern to the box template. Follow the Mask tip on page 68 to see how to do this.

Custom shapes These add flair to a pattern. Either by tracing photos/images with the Shape Layers tool or conceiving original ideas using the same tool, you can convert any path to a custom shape. Ctrl-click the path on the canvas using the Path Selection tool and hit Define Custom Shape.



Guides and Rulers These work well with grids. To set up the units you want to work in, go to Preferences>Units & Rulers to pick your options. Turn Rulers on via Ctrl+R and you're ready to drag in the guides from the ruler. Pick a bright colour for your guides via Edit>Preferences>Guides, Grid & Slices.



Grids Grids help create tight patterns as well as isometric patterns or images. To set up, go to Edit>Preferences>Guides, Grid & Slices. Here you can adjust size and colour. To ensure precise work go to View>Snap To>Snap to Grid; tick View Snap. You can turn the grid on/off via Ctrl+H.

Tip

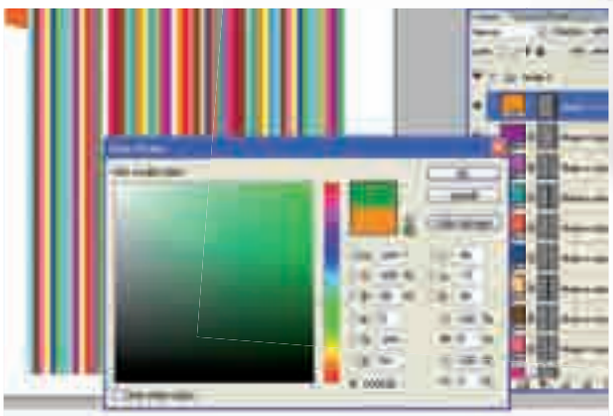
squidfingers.com

This is the online portfolio of Travis Beckham. He uses a lot of patterns in his body of work, probably not suitable for your gift box but they serve as great inspiration, and if you download and open one in Photoshop you can see how the tiles are made into a seamless pattern.

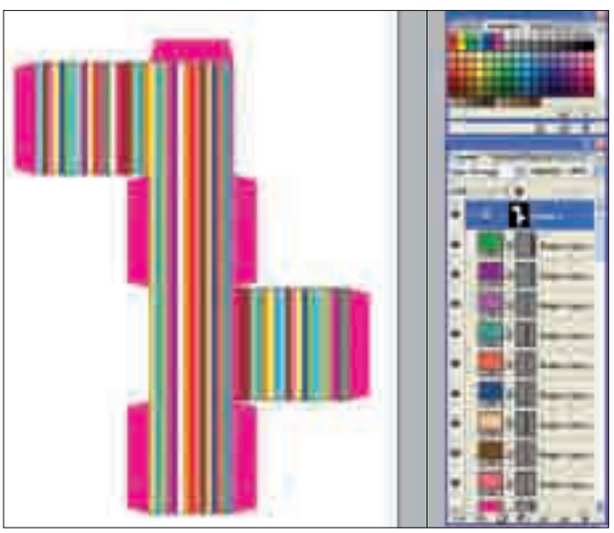
CREATING OTHER SIMPLE PATTERNS

The possibilities are endless – here's a simple alternative pattern

22 A different approach
Select the Rectangle tool and draw a vertical stripe that spans the length of your template (faces and tabs). We've made the stripe one grid point wide (about 5mm), but you can experiment as you see fit.



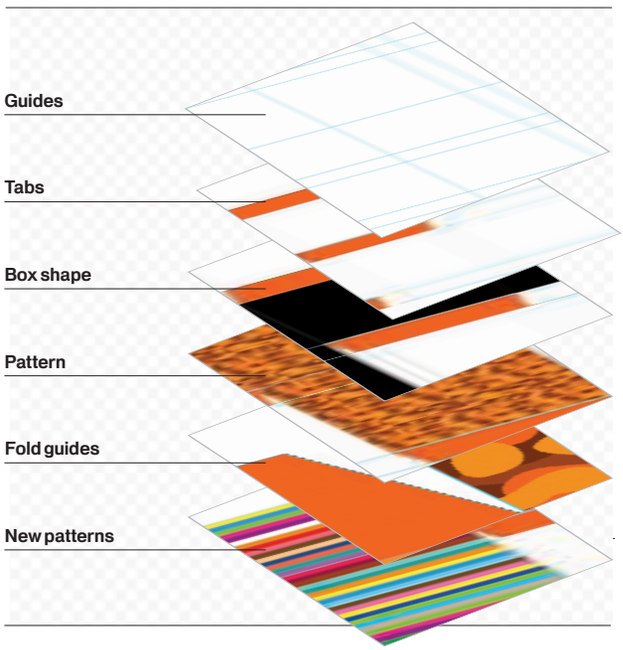
23 Stripes Using the Move tool (V), hold the Alt key and drag your stripe along the horizontal plane one grid point. This should drag a duplicate stripe. Now double-click on the layer's colour from the Layers palette and change the stripe's colour.



24 Masked off
Once you have finished dragging duplicate stripes and recolouring them, select them all on the Layers palette and merge them into a single layer. With this done, Ctrl-click on the box template's Mask icon (as in step 20) and then apply a mask to your stripes.

Layer structure

What's in the box?



eMag

PixelPaper plug-in

Become a paper pro with this plug-in from Twisting Pixels

We seem to be forever trying to replicate various paper effects in our projects, whether it be an attempt at ageing yellow parchment or creating a crumpled old scrap of paper. Whatever the look we're after, trying to get it can be a lengthy process which many of us could do without.

Thankfully, Twisting Pixels has the ideal solution to all our paper problems in the form of the PixelPaper plug-in. This tongue-twister of a package boasts a mighty 15 various paper filters including Acid, Bend, Border, Burn, Corrosion, Crinkle, Crumple, Crunch, Curl, Edge, Fold, GrainStrips, Rip, Watercolour and Wave.

The plug-in gives you paper power by the bucketloads and enables you to place individual creases or folds anywhere you wish. You can curl individual corners and even create a crumpled-up look as if you've just unscrewed a ball of paper. It's compatible with Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, Paint Shop Pro and Corel, so nobody should be left out when it comes to trying it to see what it can do.

What's particularly special about PixelPaper is the ability to control the lighting to your exact specifications by moving a point over a sphere shape to accentuate the direction of light. This helps maintain accurate shadows and highlights, something, which is essential to get right if you want convincing effects. Another control to help you achieve that realistic effect is the ability to add texture for an extra-worn look.

There are two methods of working when it comes to using this plug-in – you can either generate your own effects using the various controls and sliders, or choose from the ample Presets menu. The Presets menu offers a selection of options for each effect, enabling you to select your favourite.

The interface is really simple to follow and use, with familiar Photoshop-styled icons such as the Magnify tool to make you feel immediately at home. All changes are generated using sliders, which are dragged one way or another until the desired effect is achieved. Once you are happy with your tweaks and experimenting, then you simply press Apply and all the hard work is complete!

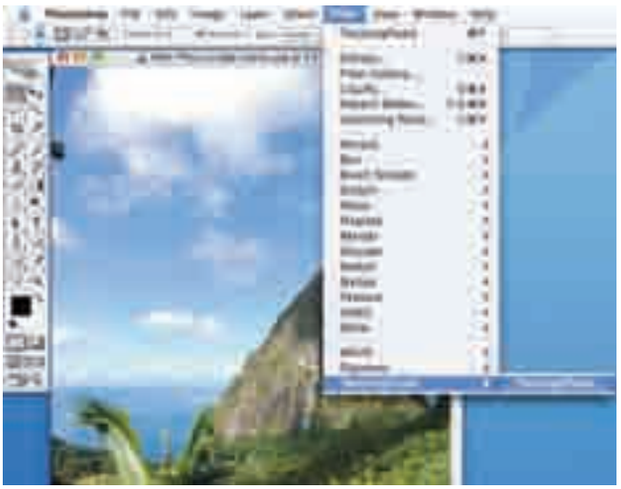
Check out **www.twistingpixels.com** for a free trial version of the plug-in, and then challenge it with all your paper perplexities…

MAKE THE MOST OF PIXELPAPER

Create precisely the effects you want with ease

01 Getting started

First log on to **www.twistingpixels.com** to download your installation software. You will be asked to choose where to save it, so make sure you save it in your plug-ins folder within Photoshop. Next, open up your image in Photoshop and go to Filter>Twisting Pixels. This will open the main interface for the plug-in.



02 Begin your project

There are two ways to start your effect. You can either choose your effect from the drop-down Filter menu, or go to the File menu and use one of the presets listed there. Here we've opted to use the Filter menu to start our project.

Save on PixelPaper

Special offer

Twisting Pixels has kindly offered a lovely 20% discount on the PixelPaper plug-in to all *Photoshop Creative* readers. To enjoy this offer, simply type in PSCRTV when making your order.

03 Get used to the workspace

You will notice a blue bounding box around your image, and this tells you the edge is active. It can be rescaled using the points on either side. Sliders adjust all the elements within an effect.

04 Crinkle cut

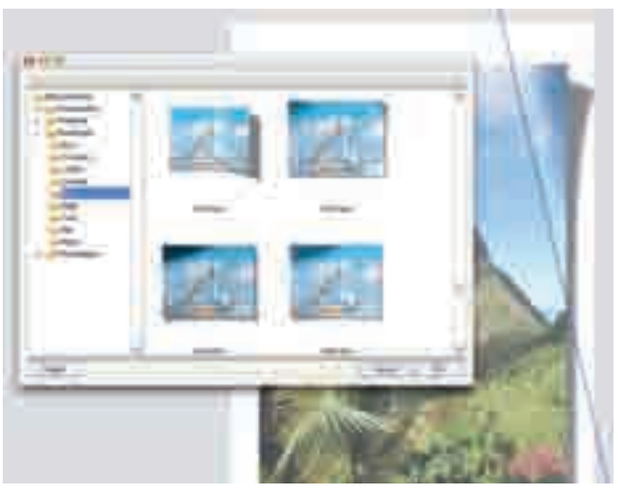
There are four different crinkle effects to choose from, which make your art look as if it's been screwed up into a ball and flattened out again. This effect is not to be confused with the Crumple effect, but we're still trying to figure out what the difference is!

05 Corrosive damage

If you're feeling really destructive, opt for the Corrosion preset in this plug-in; it melts your image away as if a bottle of acid has spilt onto your canvas. You can select the degree of damage you want to inflict by choosing from various corrosive templates and adjusting the sliders which control colour and width.

06 Fold it up

To achieve an effective folding effect, this plug-in will help you get the perfect look. Every shadow and seam is brilliantly convincing, making your artwork look as if it's been folded up in your pocket for weeks. Choose from seven different fold layouts and then experiment with fold amounts and perspective.



07 Curly wurly

One of our favourite effects available with this plug-in is the Curl option, enabling you to exercise infinite control over your image curls. You can change the angle and shadow, and bend all at the touch of a button. And the handy diagonal blue line helps you to position your curl just right.

Advice

Visit the advice centre for help with fixing photos, solutions to your image-editing problems and directions to helpful destinations on the web

Your expert panel…

GEORGE CAIRNS
A Photoshop user for many years, George can tackle any problem

ROSIE TANNER
Looking for some helpful web resources? Rosie can guide you to them

JO COLE
Jo's a big fan of saving as much time as possible, and is your guide to shortcuts

What you'll find in this section

Q+A
Get to the bottom of your image-editing woes in this part

PHOTOFIX
Send us your problem shots for advice on making them all better

RESOURCES
We guide you to the best websites for tutorials and instruction in using the Photoshop software

Send your questions to…

Post you questions to *Photoshop Creative* Q&A, Imagine Publishing Ltd, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ.

Alternatively you can email us at **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**.

Q+A

Let us sort out your image-editing quandaries

Image stacking

Q I've heard that CS3 has a way to automatically remove people from photos so that you can see an empty background. This sounds too good to be true! I've been playing with the beta and can't find this miracle filter anywhere. Does it exist and if so how do I use it?
Daniel Leaning

A This people-removing 'miracle filter' isn't actually a filter, it's a combination of various techniques including Image Stacking and Smart Objects. The good news is that the technique works well if you provide it with suitable source photos. Imagine you're a stock photographer and you need to photograph a landmark without any people in it. Tourist attractions tend to be packed full of passers-by, so you might spend ages waiting in vain for an empty scene. With the help of CS3 you can clear the area in seconds.

Let's start off with a look at how to produce suitable source photos for Photoshop to work its magic on. The trick is to put your camera on Sports mode and shoot a handful of shots of your landmark. As people walk past the camera they will appear in different parts of each photo, causing separate sections of the landmark to be visible from shot to shot.

Photoshop can stack the shots and analyse the differences between them. It then looks for bits of empty background and stitches these sections together to create a people-free shot! You don't even need to shoot your source files with a tripod (which would be a health and safety hazard in a busy location), as CS3 is clever enough to align the shots automatically.

To illustrate this cool technique, we shot some source files at Trafalgar Square in London. A continuous flow of people wandered past the lion statue and it was impossible to get a clear shot of it, especially as there was a child playing on the statue. Luckily, the kid

For the ultimate in crowd control, try out Photoshop Creative Suite 3's new people-removing tools

Tip

Selections

When you use a tool such as the Magic Wand (W) it creates a 'marching ants' selection marquee. You can spend ages modifying a marquee using the options in the Select menu, or fine-tuning the selection in Quick Mask mode. Once you close your document the selection marquee is gone for good. To make your selection more permanent, right-click inside it while you have a selection tool active. Choose Make Work Path from the pop-up menu. Click on the Paths palette and your selection will be stored as a permanent path, which you can use to generate a marquee selection.

Image-stacking repairs

Remove edge artefacts

The image-stacking technique featured in the above question can be very effective, but it's not always perfect. If someone hangs around the same spot in your sequence of images then Photoshop won't be able to fully extract them, creating a digital drop-out effect (like the rectangular blocks you get when watching a poor quality digital signal on your freeview box). Edges of the shot may contain artefacts too, due to gaps created by the auto alignment. You can get rid of edge artefacts with a little careful cropping.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

	PC	Mac
Notes tool	N	N
Default colours	D	D
Sponge tool	O	O
Quick Mask mode	Q	Q

clambered back and forth along the lion's back, enabling Photoshop to find enough clear sections of lion to stitch together. We ended up with eight different versions of our Trafalgar Square scene, all featuring passers-by and the lion-bothering kid. This provided Photoshop with enough information to generate a people-free scene.

Once you've got the source photos into your computer, open Photoshop CS3 and go to File>Scripts>Load Files Into Stack. This opens a Load Layers dialog window. Click the Browse button and select your multiple source files. Tick the Attempt to Automatically Align Source Images box. Now tick the Create Smart Object after Loading Layers box and hit OK.

Photoshop will stack the shots as separate layers and reposition the layers so they are precisely aligned. It will then merge the aligned layers into a single Smart Object layer. Go to Layers>Smart Objects>Stack Mode>Median. Photoshop will work out which objects are moving and remove them, leaving a people-free tourist attraction! The more source files you throw at Photoshop the more likely it will be to find enough empty background pixels to create an empty scene.

Secret identity

Q I've enjoyed your occasional iStock features, and they've inspired me to build up a portfolio of potential stock photographs. However, if I feature people in my photographs, each recognisable person needs to sign a model release form. It's not always possible to get people to sign one. Have you any tips on hiding faces but keeping people in shot?
Sally Fielding

A There are many tricks that photographers and designers can use to obscure people's faces in stock shots. The easiest approach is to photograph people from behind, which can save you hours

Hide people's identities in stock photography shots using techniques such as burning in silhouettes

True colours

Create printable colours

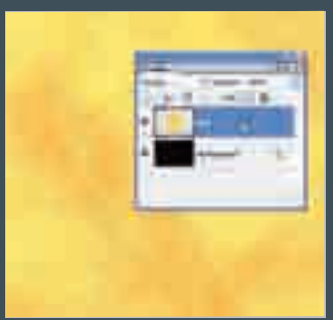
You may find it's hard to get colours that you view onscreen to print correctly. This is because your Mac or PC's monitor displays a much wider range (or gamut) of colours than your printer. This can lead to some colours looking remarkably different in print than their onscreen cousins. To see out-of-gamut colours go to View>Gamut Warning. Colours that won't print correctly will be highlighted in grey. Before you print go to Image>Mode>CMYK Color. This will convert the range of colours to a printer-friendly palette. Choose Image>Mode>RGB and the grey gamut warning will have vanished.

BRING ME SUNSHINE

Create a sun in Elements

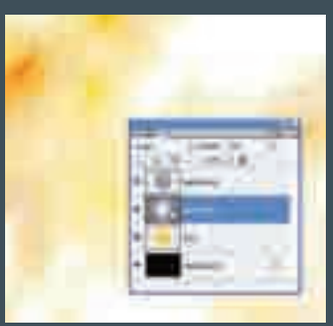
Q **I know Photoshop Elements is mostly a photo-fixing package, but is there any way to use it to create a dramatic close-up graphic of the sun?**
Monika Cranston

A Elements may be marketed as a photo-fixing tool, but it can create amazing graphics from scratch. Here's a technique that'll have you seeing sunspots in any version of Photoshop. All you need to create a sizzling sun is a mixture of filters and a bit of layer blending. You can then create striking scenes from movies like Danny Boyle's *Sunshine*.



01 **Create circle** Create a layer and draw a circle using the Elliptical Marquee tool (M). Hold Shift as you draw to create a perfect circle. Select an orange and red foreground and background colour and choose Filter>Render>Clouds to fill the circle with a fractal cloud texture.

02 **Ball of fire** Go to Filter>Distort>Spherize to turn the circle into a ball. Now press D to restore foreground and background colours to default black and white. Create a new layer. Fill the circle with greyscale clouds, spherize them and set the layer's blending mode to Vivid Light.



03 **Burn baby, burn** Create a new layer and Edit>Fill it with 50% grey. Go to Filter>Render>Lighting Effects. Set Light Type to Omni and increase its Intensity. Set the lighting effect layer's blending mode to Screen and place below the greyscale layer to increase the intensity of the CGI sun.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

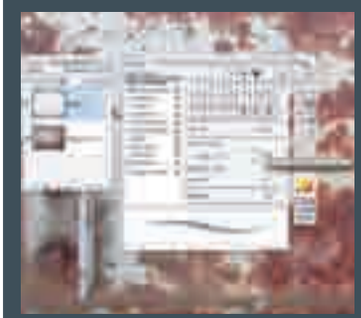
	PC	Mac
Switch colours	X	X
Art History Brush tool	Y	Y
Move tool	V	V
Magic Wand tool	W	W

MAKE SPARKS FLY

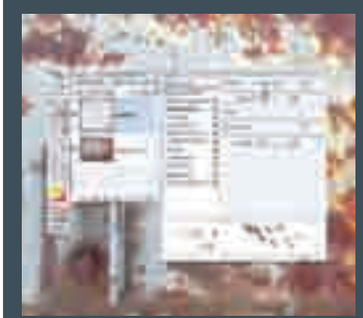
Modify brush tips to create particles

Q How would I go about creating sparks – the kind you get when you grind metal?
Jason Evans

A There are plenty of packages around which enable you to generate particles in order to create fire, flame and even spark effects. With a bit of tinkering in the Brushes palette you can create particle style effects in Photoshop. We'll also show you how to fake the effect of gravity to make the particles fly in a curve as they fall to earth – simply follow our quick three-step tutorial below.



01 Brushwork Choose orange and red foreground and background colours. Grab the Brush tool (B). Pick a soft round brush in the Brush Preset picker. Click the Brushes palette icon, hit Brush Tip Shape and set Spacing to 100%. Squash the round tip into an ellipsis and then tilt it.



02 Scatter! Click on Scattering and drag the Scatter slider to 400%. Set Control to Off. Click on Color Dynamics and set Foreground/ Background Jitter to 100%. Now spray a fountain of sparks onto a new layer and set the layer's blending mode to Color Dodge to intensify the colours.

03 Gravity Duplicate the spark layer. Go to Filter> Blur>Motion Blur. Adjust the Blur Angle to blur the sparks in the direction they are flying. A Blur Distance of 38 pixels should be enough. Go to Edit> Transform>Warp and drag the warp mesh to make the sparks curve as they fall.

of tinkering in Photoshop. That would be a dull (and short) answer, so let's employ Photoshop's box of tricks to create people pictures that don't need a release form.

One effective technique is to fake a shallow depth of field. If your camera is set on a wide aperture (like f/5.6) you can focus on a foreground object and keep the background blurred. To fake this effect in Photoshop, use the Freehand Marquee (M) or the Magnetic Lasso tool (L) to select a foreground object. Choose Select>Inverse to select the crowd in the background. Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur the background crowd. As well as hiding the crowd's identity, the shallow depth of field effect draws the attention of the viewer to the sharply focused foreground object.

You don't have to blur people to avoid the need for a signed model release form. All you need to do is hide their faces. This can be done quickly and easily by copying pixels from one part of the shot and pasting them over a visible face. I created a stock shot of mounted policemen by selecting a riot helmet from one officer, copying it and pasting it over the policeman who was looking my way. This saved me getting a pasting from the police by asking them to sign a release form!

If you do shoot police-themed shots (and they do sell well) you'll need to use the Blur tool to obscure their numerical ID badge, because each police officer has their own unique number. I tend to photograph police from a safe distance using a long lens, as I've been questioned by them for taking pictures and have even had my memory card erased!

An alternative to blurring faces or pasting pixels over them is to darken them. Take the commuter-themed shot used to illustrate this question, for example. The original image featured recognisable faces in the crowd, which would have caused it to be rejected. To hide faces in shots like this, grab the Burn tool (O). Set it to Midtones and gently darken the faces to make the people look like they are silhouettes in the shade.

Border selections

Q I'm trying to create a dramatic shot featuring ominous backlit clouds. Any suggestions on a suitable technique?
Adam Baker

A Although you could start out with a blank document and create your clouds from scratch (see issue 21), this technique will work well with a suitably cloudy source photo. The trick to making it look like the sun is illuminating a cloud from behind, is to add a high contrast edge to it.

There are several ways to approach this challenge. You could use the Dodge tool set to Highlights to brighten up the cloud edge. This hand-painted technique is time-consuming and it's tricky to avoid brightening up the sky as well as the cloud edge. A faster way to backlight clouds is to create and modify marquee selections.

Faster fills

Keyboard shortcut

In our answer to the 'Border selections' question we filled a border marquee selection with white by moving the mouse up to the main menu and picking Edit>Fill>White. A faster way to fill a selection with a colour is to hit Control and the Backspace key. This instantly fills any active marquee with the current background colour. To fill the selection with the foreground colour press Alt+Backspace. To change the foreground or background colour and fill a selection hit Shift+F5. This opens the Fill dialog window, letting you change colours and tweak their blending modes.

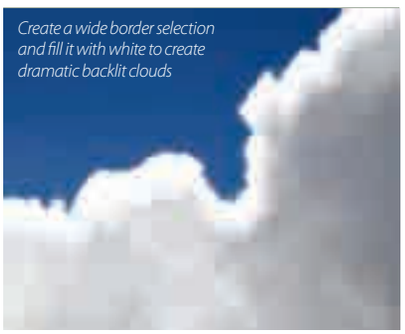
KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

	PC	Mac
Paint Bucket tool	G	G
Measure tool	I	I
Shape tool	U	U
Dodge/Burn tool	O	O

If the cloud is floating against a clear blue sky grab the Magic Wand tool (W), set its Tolerance to 50 and click to select the blue. Choose Select>Inverse and the 'marching ants' marquee will cling to the edge of your cloud.

Now create a new layer by clicking on the Create New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Go to Select>Modify>Border, and the Border Selection dialog window will appear. Type in a value of around 65 pixels. The marquee selection will widen to include parts of the sky and sections of the cloud edge. Go to Select>Transform Selection. Use the arrow keys to reposition the marquee border so that it overlaps the edge of the clouds. Hit Return to apply the transformation.

To soften the border marquee selection go to Select>Feather and choose a value of around 12 pixels. Make sure that the new transparent layer is targeted in the Layers palette and Edit>Fill the selection with white.



Create a wide border selection and fill it with white to create dramatic backlit clouds

White pixels will fill the border and cling to the edge of the cloud. To blend the white more effectively with the cloud edge, set the layer blending mode to Overlay. Press Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect the marquee. The cloud's edge will now appear much brighter than the rest of the cloud, creating the illusion that it's being backlit by the sun. Tidy up any overexposed blue sky pixels by using a soft-edged Eraser tool (E) to remove parts of the border that overlap the sky.

Super sandstorms

Q I've got a cool shot of some sand-dunes that look like a desert. Is there any way that I can add a sandstorm effect to the shot?
Zuhal Reid

A Photoshop has all the tools you need to add dramatic sandstorms to your photos in seconds. Start by clicking the Foreground Color icon in the Toolbox and choosing a brown sandy colour. Click the Background Color icon and pick a similar but darker brown. Now click the Create a New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette and go to Filter>Render>Clouds. This will fill the layer with a sand-coloured cloud texture.

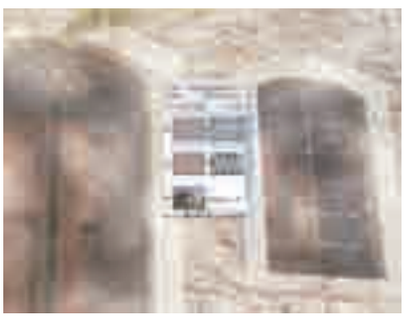
To add a sandy texture to the layer go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Set Amount to 60%. Use a Gaussian Distribution setting. Tick the Monochromatic box and hit OK. Now the layer looks like it's made from tiny grains of sand.

To make the grains look wind-blown, go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Use the Angle wheel to 'blow' the sand in any direction you like. A Distance value of 38 should create a realistic wind-blown effect. Now click OK.

At this stage your sand layer will be too solid. To mix it with the background, set the sand layer's blending mode to Screen. To poke extra holes in the sand layer, click the Add a Mask icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Target the mask by clicking on it. Press D to change the foreground and background colours to the default black and white.

Choose Filter>Render>Clouds to fill the layer mask with a greyscale fractal cloud texture. This will poke random holes in the sandstorm layer, revealing parts of the background photo.

For a more sophisticated multi-layered sandstorm, repeat the previous steps to create multiple layers of wind-blown sand.



Whip up a sandstorm by combining the power of Photoshop's filters and layer masks

Book resources

Elements users who need a helping hand should track down *Elements 5.0 A-Z* by Philip Andrews. This is a superb reference guide for those getting to grips with the program. It's published by Focal Press, priced £17.99.

Safety net

Create a copy

Photoshop gives you plenty of options to retrace your steps if your image editing goes pear-shaped. You can use the Edit>Step Backward command to turn back time, or click on an earlier history state in the History palette. You can even press F12 (or choose File>Revert) to return to the last saved version of your file. When approaching any creative project, it makes sense to drag the background layer onto the Create a New Layer icon. This creates a duplicate layer that you can work on, safe in the knowledge that an unedited version is available on the layer below.

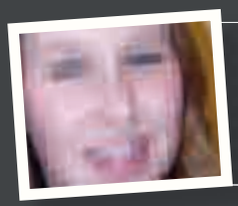
Bigger brushes

Brush tip tips!

The Brush Preset picker is packed full of different brush tips, ranging from soft round brushes to brush tips that will fill the screen with scattered leaves. To get a better look at each brush tip's preview thumbnail, click on the small arrow icon at the top right of the picker. Choose Large Preview from the picker's pop-up menu list. You can now scroll through a selection of large thumbnails, making it much easier to spot a suitable brush tip for your creative projects.

PHOTO FIX

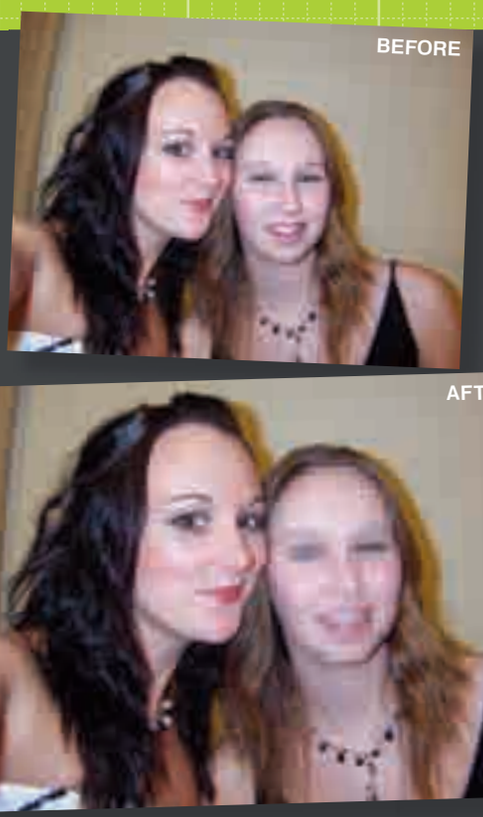
Send in your troublesome images for us to fix…



Send your problematic photos on a CD to:

Photo Fix, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ

Unfortunately we cannot return CDs



Censor your images

Whether you want to protect an identity or cover up an ex-girl/boyfriend, here's how to censor a photo easily

Censoring photographs is something that's frequently done in the news, both in print and on television.

Pixelation in order to preserve somebody's privacy is a common sight – whether it's a person who's in an incriminating scene, a celebrity who has a court order protecting their child from the media, a car number plate in a documentary or even nakedness!

Censoring your own images is a very straightforward process, which can be performed within a matter of a couple of minutes. All you need is an image to hand that requires some covering up, the Marquee tool and the correct choice of filter.

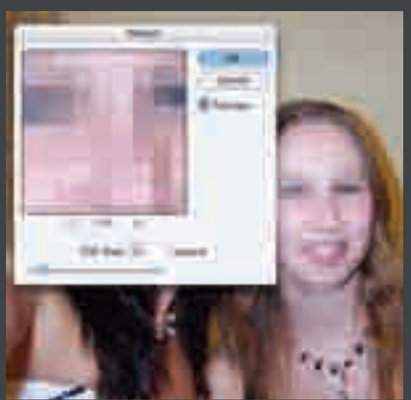
Put these three things together and hey presto, your censored sensation will be created. Here's a breakdown of how it's done…

NOW YOU SEE IT…

The easy way to be a censor

01 Select your item Zoom into the subject you want to censor, using the Zoom tool. Here we want to censor out a face from view. Duplicate the layer of your photograph and choose the Elliptical Marquee tool to select the part of the photo you want to censor.

02 A bit of a blur The next step is to go to Filter>Pixelate>Mosaic. This is what gives you the blurry, censored effect you often see in newspapers and on TV.



03 Misty view In the Mosaic window, drag the Cell Size to a value of around 25. This will censor it but still enable you to vaguely make out what was censored. All that's left to do now is press the OK button and you're done!

Tool School

Pixelate filter

The Pixelate filter has great options to experiment with. Try going to Filter>Pixelate and playing around with some of the following options: Color Halftone for dotty creation, Crystallize for a watery-looking effect, and Facet for a colour boost and an arty effect.

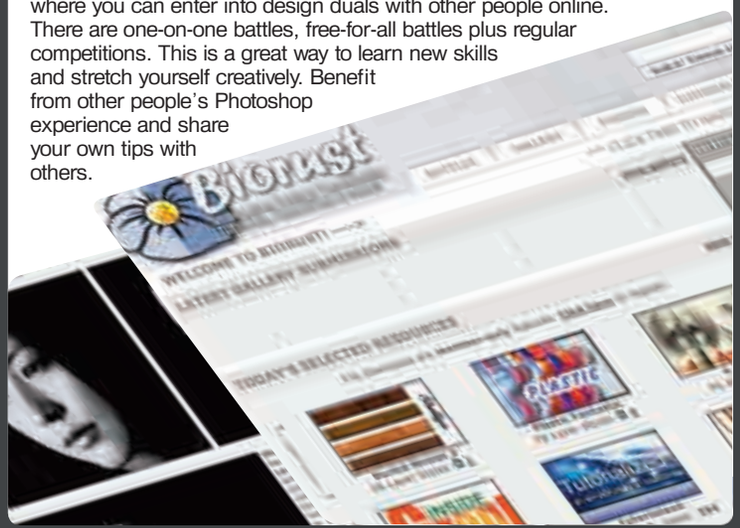
RESOURCES

Even more fantastic Photoshop goodies from the World Wide Web...

BIORUST

http://biorust.com

Biorust plays host to a great community of designers and fellow Photoshoppers, and is the perfect place to pose questions and pitch ideas. This comprehensive site is bulging with info, offering tutorials, resources and a lively forum. There's even a 'Battles' section where you can enter into design duals with other people online. There are one-on-one battles, free-for-all battles plus regular competitions. This is a great way to learn new skills and stretch yourself creatively. Benefit from other people's Photoshop experience and share your own tips with others.



PHOTOSHOP TEMPLATES

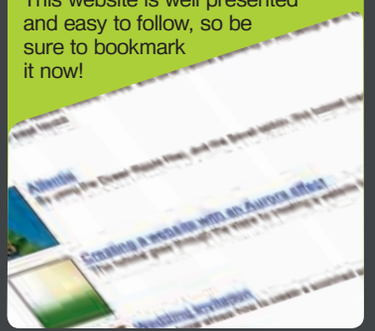
http://freephotoshop templates.com

If the feature on page 16 has inspired you to put your portfolio online, this site might be right up your alley. It provides links for the top five providers of free Photoshop website templates. There are also some handy Photoshop tutorials – even a section where you can download free speaking characters to put on your own site!

PEGAWEB

www.pegaweb.com

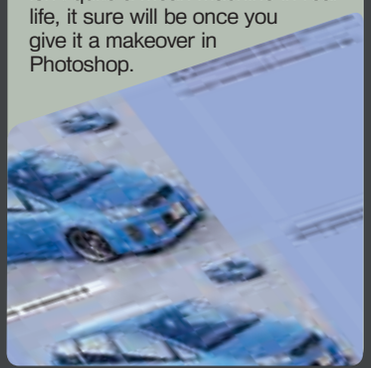
This is a great spot to swat up on the latest Photoshop techniques, thanks to a bulging library of tutorials. The best thing is that they're split into two categories: beginners and advanced. We love that this site allows for people's comfort zones, rather than freaking out beginners with mind-bending walkthroughs, or boring expert Photoshoppers with tutorials that are far too simplistic. This website is well presented and easy to follow, so be sure to bookmark it now!



DIGIMODS

www.digimods.co.uk

If you're as mad about cars as you are about Photoshop, check out this site, which perfectly combines your passions. Digimods offers straight-talking tutorials on almost everything car-related. Learn how to add side vents to your beloved wheels, add tinted windows or even neon lights! And if your car isn't quite a mean machine in real life, it sure will be once you give it a makeover in Photoshop.



DAVRO DIGITAL

www.davrodigital.co.uk

It's always nice when you meet like-minded people, and David Rowley who runs Davro Digital is a Photoshop lover through and through. As a fellow user who's truly hooked on the program, Rowley shares his experience with us through a range of top tutorials. There's also an online shop where you can buy video tutorials and CDs. This has a really nice personal feel to it, which makes you feel at home in an instant. Check out Rowley's impressive gallery and submit your own work to the Guest Gallery.

VIDEO TUTES

www.video-tutes.com

Sometimes seeing is believing, especially when we come across a tutorial step we just can't figure out. That's why this is a great site for anyone who wants to see how things are done tool for tool, moment by moment. Loaded with Photoshop tutorials in the lovely modern-day format of video, you can be sure to master new skills faster than ever. It's like having a virtual helping hand guiding you through everything you need to know in Photoshop.

eMag

creative reviews

Discover what we think of Mustek's first ever digital photo frame, plus check out how we rate the latest Collage Poster service from Photobox

Main review

Mustek Digital Photo Frame 82

Other review

The latest Collage Poster service from Photobox 84

Book reviews

Complete Color Harmony Workbook 86
Lighting 87
The Visual Dictionary of Graphic Design 87
Poster Art 87

"The modern way to display your images"

Mustek Digital Photo Frame

CHECK IT OUT! | VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.PSHOPCREATIVE.CO.UK

HARDWARE

Mustek PF-D800 Digital Photo Frame

Digital photo frames are fast becoming this year's must-have method of presentation, and high quality devices are available at low prices

info

COMPANY
Mustek

WEB
www.mustek.com

PRICE (SRP)
£140

SCREEN
20cm (8-inch) flat TFT LCD (16:9)

One of the latest technology producers to churn out digital frames is German-based brand Mustek, with its PF-D800 and PF-A700A. Compared to its contemporaries the PF-D800 is an appealing choice, with a black plastic trim fitted around a large 20cm (8-inch) flat TFT LCD (16:9) display. Offering nothing revolutionary in terms of design, the unit does have its compact nature (274mm x 34mm x 203mm and 660g) in its favour.

Aesthetes will appreciate the hidden basic controls on the reverse, which include power, Slideshow mode, volume, previous/next, stop, exit, etc. It may be irksome to action changes if the frame is mounted above head height, but the included infrared remote control will be very useful. The unit is powered solely via DC power, so users wanting to wall mount the frame will have to drape the attached cable down the wall – but the wire is a lot thinner than some of its peers and less of a distraction.

Multi-functionality is the main draw of the PF-D800, with the unit able to process a range of files, including jpegs, tiffs, music (MP3) and video (in motion jpeg format). The PF-D800 houses two built-in speakers (two 1-watts) and a headphone jack, suggesting owners can accompany tunes with slideshows, release captured audio from video or use the device as an MP3 player. In terms of connectivity, the device is equipped with a built-in memory card reader

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK...

Find out more about the PF-D800

What makes the Mustek PF-D800 Digital Photo Frame worth looking at?

Speaker set
The unit is fitted with two 1-watt speakers, perfect for playing audio in moving jpeg files for movies or to have music accompany slideshows.

Power up
The on/off switch is at the back of the device. The remote control can also activate/deactivate the PF-D800. A green LED will convey activation.

LCD love
The frame has one of the larger LCD screens on the market, yielding a diagonal spec of 8" (20cm). Ideal for showing images off to their full potential.

for maximum compatibility with all major memory cards: SD, MMC, MS, MS Pro, MS Duo, CF. Eagle-eyed tech-heads will notice the frame doesn't support xD, disappointing some owners of Olympus and Fujifilm cameras who may rely on this memory card.

The user interface is clean, colourful and stylish. Users can customise the slideshow or static image, the instructions make navigation effortless and the slideshow activation button on the remote control makes it all child's play.

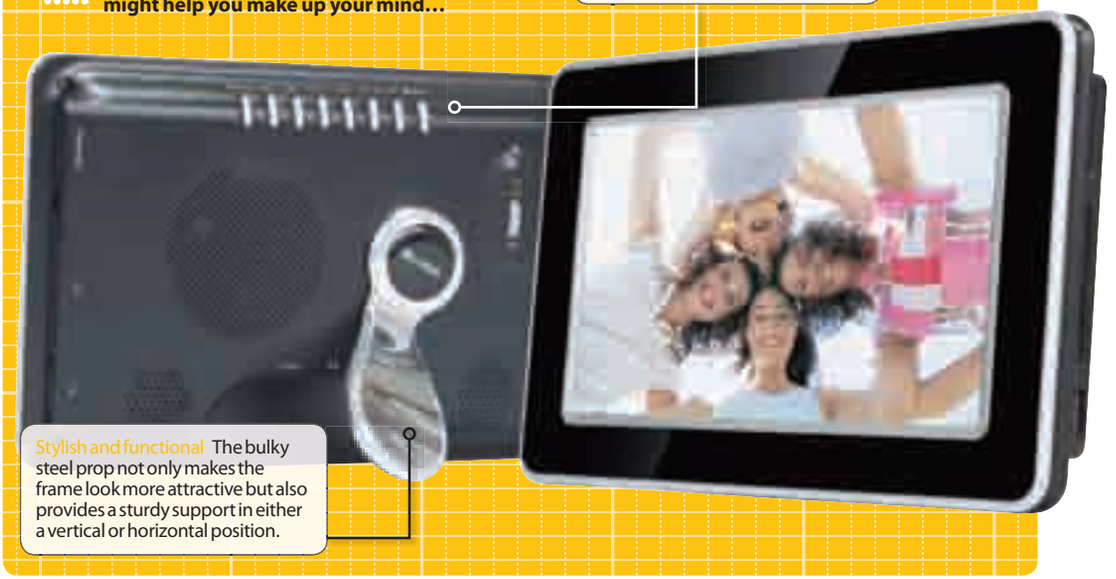
In terms of quality of output, the frame delivers on its £140 price tag, especially when pitted against less worthy competitor devices. The high-res output of crisp images is extremely pleasing, with near-perfect detail rendition and consistent colour interpretation.

All these factors are likely to resonate with the keen Photoshopper craving to exhibit a portfolio of vivacious images. There's an option to stretch images to full screen, but for shots taking in Portrait mode this can make even the thinnest model look like the 'before' in a Weight Watchers commercial.

Where other models fail is their lack of intuition, but after rigorous testing we're pleased to report the same cannot be said of the PF-D800. For example, users can opt for the pictures to be presented in a random fashion rather than a sequential order, which on a high capacity memory card can be important. Furthermore, owners can enter the menu or even turn off the device and the frame won't reset the slideshow to the beginning. There's also the option to scroll through thumbnails to locate desired snaps rather than trawling the collection manually.

SMART CHOICE

Why should you choose the PF-D800 to present your pics? Well, here are a couple of pointers that might help you make up your mind…


Out of sight The onboard controls are neatly tucked away at the top of the reverse of the device, so all that's on show are your beautiful images.
Stylish and functional The bulky steel prop not only makes the frame look more attractive but also provides a sturdy support in either a vertical or horizontal position.

You can also alter the speed of transitions in the Settings panel, but there are only three options: Fast, Normal and Slow. The Fast mode is incredibly quick, which can be positive or negative, depending on the number of images lined up. Slow mode is painfully sluggish, but may be preferable when mounted on the wall or on a desk. Normal mode is the most suitable to demonstrate a slideshow to an audience or present a stream of Photoshop images to a prospective client.

Overall, the device delivers images at a fantastic resolution and offers the flexibility of presentation options. Also, it doesn't overheat. An improvement would be an xD memory card reader and even touch screen technology, plus a range of colours or changeable fascias.

The device only supports jpeg files up to 32MB, so won't process large files such as some Photoshop work which may be layer intensive, for instance, but for normal photos the PF-D800 will do images justice at a reasonable cost.

PROS

- Plays both music and video files
- Wide range of playback options
- Includes a handy remote
- Options to mount on wall or desk
- Great resolution and colour interpretation

CONS

- Doesn't support xD memory cards
- Powered solely through the mains
- Lack of colour options
- Only three speed options
- Only supports files up to 32MB

VERDICT

8.0

Great for presenting images, but no USB connectivity for Photoshop files, and max file size is 32MB

"MULTI-FUNCTIONALITY IS THE MAIN DRAW OF THE PF-D800 DIGITAL PHOTO FRAME, WITH THE UNIT ABLE TO PROCESS A RANGE OF FILES"

Frame me
The black trim of the PF-D800 is shiny and fairly standard. It would be good to see new colours or interchangeable fascias introduced.

Thick or thin
The device is relatively svelte in appearance, boasting compact dimensions of 274mm x 34mm x 203mm and weighing in at a light 660g.

Hitting the wall
Bonus points have been attributed to the fact that the high quality unit can be mounted to a wall as well as propped up on a desk or mantle.

PRODUCTS

Show off your work in quirky new ways with this new service from Photobox

Photobox Collage Poster

Photobox is one of Europe's biggest online photo services and is renowned for superb print quality and efficient processing times – but what else does it have to offer? Sticking with the theme of sharing your work as discussed in our feature on page 16, we decided to check out the Collage Poster service.

Getting started is easy. Once you've registered for free, you're given the option to upload images into your own albums. If you place images in your Temporary Print Album, the amount you may upload is unlimited. Anyone who signs up gets free storage space too, so you can store and share your JPEG images in one safe place. You're first given 200MB of space (this amounts to hundreds of images) and this goes up by 50MB every time you order more prints.

To start creating your Collage Poster, simply go to the Gifts section of the website (**www.photobox.co.uk**) and select the appropriate tab. Click Create a Collage Now, and the rest is pretty self-explanatory. There are three design layouts to choose from: Classic displays 25 images, Contemporary displays a mix of 18 landscape and portrait images, and Multi-coloured displays up to 35 images on a coloured background. We opted for the contemporary style, and away we went.

Any images you have uploaded to Photobox are available in a column next to the collage. You build up your poster by dragging and dropping each desired image into one of the squares in the template. This process is really easy, and you can tweak the positioning of the image and the magnification once it has been inserted in a square. If you're not happy with the image positioning, you can delete it and drag another into its place.

The poster is 30" x 20" in size, and incredibly, we received ours in perfect nick the day after we ordered it. The Photobox service is certainly second to none, due to speedy turnaround times and impeccable packaging. The print quality is really good too, with vivid colours being the strong point.

If you're looking for a quirky gift idea or a new way to present your work, the Photobox Collage Poster is a great idea for an impressive item with very little effort.

info

COMPANY
Photobox Collage

WEB
www.photobox.co.uk

PRICE
£19.99

WHAT'S INVOLVED

Creating your own collage

Log on First, go to **www.photobox.co.uk** and register for free. This only takes a minute and requires the usual contact info and passwords.

Start uploading You now need to upload the images. Just drag them from any file into the drop box on-screen and wait for them to load.

Your collage In the Photo Gifts menu select Collage Poster and pick a collage template. The images will appear on the side; drag and drop them into place.

Order With the collage complete, hit Add to Basket and enter your payment details. If you do it before 4pm it'll be with you the next day!

Ordering If you get your order in before 4pm on a weekday, then Photobox will dispatch your order the same day – meaning no agonising wait for your collage!

Templates Choose from one of three collage templates – Classic, Contemporary or Multi-coloured. The templates vary in the number of images they can hold.

Layout Once you drop your images into place you can move them around and zoom in and out. You can even rotate your shots and delete them if they don't look right in that particular spot.

Price Each collage costs £19.99, although the more you order the cheaper they become! Five or more will cost you £13.99 each and 20 or more will cost £10.50 each.

PROS

- The collage is easy to create
- Next day delivery
- Something different

CONS

- You can't alter templates

VERDICT

8.0

This is an excellent gift idea that can be rustled up in a flash. It looks great and the service you receive is brilliant

eMag

BOOKS

Colour your projects with confidence

Complete Color Harmony Workbook

Colour has a huge impact on our daily lives, yet most people go about their routine unaware of the power and effect it can actually have. This book is a really useful tool if you plan to have colour play a big role in your project. It enlightens you to the mood and impression that specific colours can create – something every good artist should be aware of.

Unlike most other books, the *Complete Color Harmony Workbook* has a really interactive feel. Each colour palette comes with 20 colour swatches that you can tear out and use to match with your particular scheme of work. This is also particularly useful for designing a colour scheme for the home and for fashion lovers, as well as artists and designers.

There are four main steps in the process of choosing an effective colour palette to work with. The first is to define the mood you want to create, using the themed chapters. The second is to pick the colour you think works best with your project. The third is to play with the various colour themes, using the tear-out swatches to match your ink or materials. The final step is to refine your choice, cutting the possibilities down to one set colour scheme.

This book offers a great education on colour and will no doubt change the way you think about your Photoshop projects. It certainly will see plenty of use as an excellent reference guide.

Colour combinations You can find out the best colour palettes to suit your project by searching through the themed chapters.

Get the right treatment These pages are particularly helpful if you want to use a special colour treatment for dramatic effect.

info

AUTHORS
Lesa Sawahata & Kiki Eldridge

PRICE
£19.99

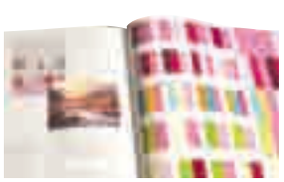
PUBLISHER
Rockport

ISBN
13-978-1-59253-329-9

USE COLOUR CORRECTLY

Get creative with swatches and palettes

Master the colour wheel The book starts with a lesson in basic colour terminology and an intro to the all-important colour wheel.



Choose a theme There are 24 chapters, each exampling a different colour combination. Themes include powerful, earthy, tropical & subdued.

Colour psychology These pages talk through the facets of colour, describing their emotional qualities and how they are best used.

Colour conversion Photoshop users will find the Process Color Conversion Chart useful; it gives the proportions of CMYK in each colour.

Swatch it Every colour theme comes with a wide variety of swatches which you can tear out and then experiment with.

NOTES | LET US KNOW IF THERE'S A TYPE OF PHOTOSHOP BOOK YOU'D LIKE US TO REVIEW – JUST EMAIL PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

The Visual Dictionary of Graphic Design

Know your hues from your halftones and your baseline from your Bauhaus

This is a useful book to have to hand whether you're a graphic designer or not. Loaded with hundreds of design terms and their meanings, it's a great tool for improving your design vocabulary.

As well as including traditional design terms, a large proportion of the book is dedicated to modern design concepts and styles. It covers things such as typefaces, colour styles and composition – enough to make you sound like a true pro. The layout is really user-friendly, sticking to the traditional alphabetical order of a dictionary. Obviously a large aspect of the book is the visual element. Every definition or explanation is teamed with great imagery and annotations, as well as striking typeface examples.

Printed mainly on rough textured paper, there's a shabby-chic feel to it, which will appeal to trendy types who like their books to make a statement both on the inside and out. This book is a real treat and perfect for the coffee table to dip in and out of.

Bold and bright This book uses strong colour and quirky imagery to get its point across. It's touches like these which turn an otherwise unexciting concept into a thoroughly enjoyable read.

SWOT UP THE EASY WAY

Become a design geek in no time

Modern examples Definitions are accompanied by modern imagery you can immediately relate to.

Design through time The book features a timeline of design trends and events that have occurred since 1476.

Laid back lingo The book explains things simply, without getting bogged down in jargon. It's straight to the point.

History lesson You'll learn plenty about the history of design. All major movements of the last 600 years are covered.

info

AUTHORS
Gavin Ambrose & Paul Harris

PRICE
£14.95

PUBLISHER
AVA

ISBN
13: 978-2-9407373-43-4

Lighting

Learn the basics of lighting with this illuminating read

info

AUTHOR
David Prakel

PRICE
£17.95

PUBLISHER
AVA

ISBN
13: 978-2-940373-03-1

Every good photographer will tell you that for a great shot you need great light. But to the untrained eye, finding the perfect light for your photography can be a challenge. This book is an ideal reference for those wanting to learn more about the subject of light and improve their photography as a result.

Set out in an easy-to-follow format, the book is an ideal learning tool with plenty of diagrams to explain camera and lighting positions. It covers essential colour theory as well as in-depth information about exposure. No doubt the best thing about this book is the dramatic imagery, which offers inspiration to any aspiring photographer. Every chapter leaves you wanting to go out and try new techniques.

This is the second book in the *Basics Photography* series, with other titles including *Composition, Capturing Color, Post Production: Color and Post Production: Black and White*. It's a great buy for anyone wanting to improve their source imagery and in turn improve their Photoshop creations. Well worth a read.

Poster Art

A great source of inspiration and information

The power of the poster plays a huge role in our culture, offering a means of communication with which everyone can identify. From political posters of wartime propaganda to the advertising campaigns of today, it seems the presence of the poster is often greater than we realise.

This book tracks the development of poster design, breaking its composition down into artwork, typography, printing and finishing. Every poster includes info on the designer and their inspiration.

This is a great book to flick through for new ideas, and you can enjoy a multitude of themes and styles from witty to serious, subtle to seriously outrageous.

As with anything, presentation is key and the book makes a concerted effort to stand out on the shelf. The funky cover is a recycled cardboard hardback, great for coffee table book fanatics. Just like the subject, the book tries hard to make a statement and it certainly succeeds.

info

AUTHOR
Charlotte Rivers

PRICE
£20

PUBLISHER
RotoVision

ISBN
13: 978-2-940361-55-7

Exhibit

Has your work made it into print this time?

Entries have been flooding in over the past few weeks, and our desks are stacked with all your weird and wonderful creations. As always, trawling through them to find a winner has been an absolute pleasure, causing a lot of debate and controversy among team members about who should take the title for this issue.

We couldn't help but notice the distinct change of tack from many of the usual dark, demonic images we get in, switching to entries a little lighter and friendlier in theme. Perhaps it's all this sunshine that's making you feel decidedly jolly and at peace with the world!

Well done to Dan Hadley who scoops first place this issue. His piece, which is entitled 'Land of the Free', is a great montage dedicated to America, and his expert application of grain works brilliantly.

Other entrants who came close in the running are the talented Urban Carlsson, for his overgrown car creation, and Susan Thompson for her eerie tower and dramatic sky. We loved the thought process behind Adam Linguard's Rainforest entry, demonstrating a great use of imagination.

Don't forget to check out this issue's Readers' Challenge images on the free disc. Simply download the ones you fancy using and get cracking on your Photoshop creation. Alternatively, if you're still working on something created with images from an earlier issue, don't hesitate to send that in too. As long as it's creative, we'll take a look at it!

Get your work featured

If you'd like to share your work with others, send your pictures in to us and you could be featured on these pages. Just pop your images onto a CD and send it to:

Exhibit, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ, UK

Alas, we can't return any CDs.
If your entry is under 2MB, you can email it to **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**

Dan Hadley

Land of the Free

There are some montages that come together and look so right, and this is certainly one of them. We love Dan's great use of blending, which has helped create flow and fluidity within the image. He's opted to apply grain to the shot, which works well and helps tie all the elements together.

THE WINNER!

Turn to page 98 and enter this issue's Readers' Challenge

Susan Thompson (right)

Haunted House

"I designed this piece using the Basic filter and the different layer modes. The images I used came from issue 18. They consisted of the mansion, tree limbs, the foggy field and the eyes from the girl."

Adam Linguard (bottom left)

Rainforest

This quirky artwork shows great imagination, and we love the inspired use of graphics within an otherwise mundane source photo. Thinking outside of the box will always win points with us!

Amanda Riley (bottom right)

American Dream

"I decided to go with an American theme, so I redesigned the car using the American flag." We love the use of mirroring, Amanda, and the background creates a great sense of perspective.

Exhibit

Istvan Bukovszki (above)

Sunshine

"I created this using ten pictures. I wanted to create an image of just one colour, so chose this gold-yellow tone. I took the originals in Great Yarmouth – buildings, a beautiful temple, the sky and my friend – and used three other pics from the CD."

Clement Tracol (top right)

Lady of Liberty

"I used the different free brushes from the Photoshop creative discs to paint the Statue of Liberty – I hope you like it!"

Paul Thomas (left)

Textured Treasure

This textured delight has been expertly constructed using an array of source images. We love the great array of tones, and Paul has done a great job in layering his artwork to create drama and depth.

Daenna Newkirk (left)

Remember Paris

"I produced the background layers using brushes from issues 2, 3, 13 and 19, then applied the Photoshop Copperplate Prints Action to one of the flowers. I desaturated the second and inverted it, then blended the Eiffel Tower using Luminosity mode. I had great fun experimenting!"

Urban Carlsson (top left)

The Power of Flowers

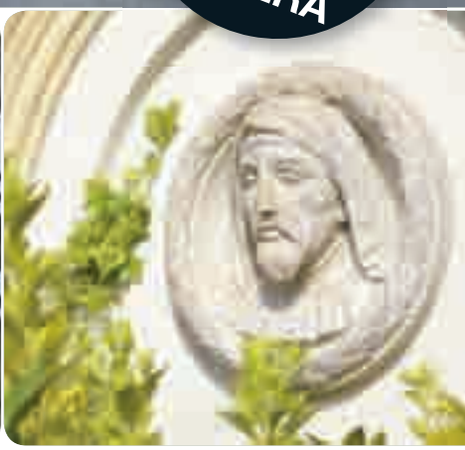
This car is certainly looking sorry for itself, and that's all thanks to Urban's handiwork with Photoshop. We love the textured rust effect he's applied here.

Nik Morgan (top right)

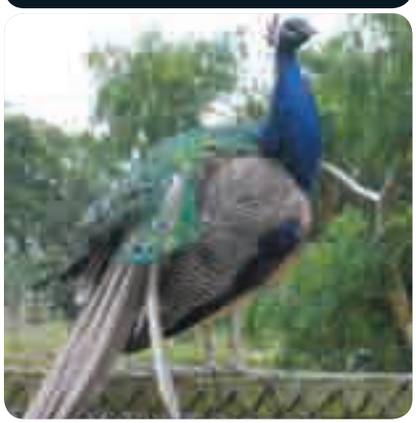
Gunge Attack

Nik has used the Fluid Graphics tutorial from issue 19 to surround the Statue of Liberty with a terrifying sea of blobs. Looks like he's mastered that liquid design expertly.

WIN! OLYMPUS FE-230 DIGITAL CAMERA



Enter our challenge and see your work in the magazine!



HOW TO ENTER

Access the Readers' Challenge folder from the side panel on our CD and copy it to your desktop. Once you've completed your masterpiece, send it to us on a CD along with your name, address and a few words about your creation, to:

Readers' Challenge
Photoshop Creative
Imagine Publishing
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset, UK
BH2 6EZ

Readers' Challenge

Here's the latest batch of images to work your creative magic with

Regular readers will know we don't give you an easy ride when it comes to the Readers' Challenge – forever concocting the most random mix of source images possible for you to work with! But no matter how bizarre the batch may be, you guys always come up with creations of astounding brilliance.

This issue we've selected another fine mix of photos, which we're sure you can transform into something magical. You'll find all these shots on the free disc; just download them and away you go. As always, there's no deadline for the competition, so whether you're from the UK, USA or Outer Mongolia everyone has just as much chance of winning. Don't worry if you're new to Photoshop either – as long as you give us a big dose of imagination we'll be happy. The great thing about this competition is that it's the perfect way to practise stretching your skills.

NOTES | IF YOUR ENTRY IS UNDER 2MB, YOU CAN EMAIL IT TO US AT **PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK**. UNFORTUNATELY WE CAN'T RETURN CDS

Paint like Seurat

Georges Seurat was famed for painting solely with dots. Unfortunately for him, Photoshop was not invented back then, which probably meant a very achey wrist! Luckily, you can recreate this very image without the repetitive strain injury by turning to page 28 and following our expert tutorial…